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SUPER PLAY

ISSUE 29
MARCH 1995

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A new TV series by the creator of 3X3 Eyes

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Street Fighter II anime movie special

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INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE

Super Play

March 1995 Issue 29

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SUPER PLAY EDITORIAL

FROM THE BIG CHAIR

Our full contents listing starts just over the page

Nintendo have sold over six million cartridges of *Donkey Kong Country* worldwide, which has generated them $400 million. From this rather impressive amount, the company will be spending $32 million on marketing. And the vast majority of this cash will be spent on keeping the Super Nintendo (and Game Boy) in the forefront of everybody's minds.

In the last year, Nintendo want to have sold four million SNESses and 20 million carts. And in the next year, the company want to sell a further three million Super Nintendos. It's a very healthy machine.

So where's the decent software? Why aren't the vast majority of games knocking the combined socks off every SNES owner? The problem is this; great games *do* sell in lorryloads, but mediocre games can sell well enough to cover the costs of production, as well as make a tidy profit for the mediocre software companies that produced them. If you could release a crap game, earn a few grand and never have to say sorry to the poor saps who bought it, you would do it wouldn't you?

There's nothing we can do about people buying crap games in the USA or Japan, but in the UK the only answer is for people to make sure they know what they're getting. Playing games in the shop is one way. Reading reviews in *Super Play* is another. Even finding out about stuff from your mates is better than nothing.

We'd prefer you to read *Super Play*, of course, because it's packed with everything to do with the SNES, and is brimming over with news, tips and stuff that you just can't get anywhere else. And finally I've got to the point of this editorial. Phew. Enjoy the mag!

James Leach

James Leach, Editor

INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE
SUPER PLAY

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We serve news with fries, onion rings and a thick chocolate shake. Which represents our opinions on everything in the SNES world. And tastes nice.

GAMEFREAK 62

Corssing the Atlantic on a leaky old barge might be some people's idea of fun, but Gamefreak prefers to give you all the latest on the gaming world. He can't swim, you see.

MODE 7 68

Allan Brett was vaporised in a meteor shower this morning. Luckily he managed to do a great Mode 7 before he vanished in red-hot fragments. He'll be back next month.

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The place where you can buy all manner of things, and do so in the comfort of your own home. Sit down, make yourself a warm drink and browse through the pages.

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Some letters are clever, some are long. But we always choose the ones written on edible rice paper. It reminds us of when we were growing up on that farm on Tattooine.

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Not even the Kennedy family can compete with us when it comes to writing about every SNES game. The Johnsons of Wolverhampton are pretty close, though.

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Martin Scorsese was going to turn this into a searing film. But sadly he got Back Issues confused with a top violent novel. Still, at least he bought an issue 14 off us. Bless him.

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Us? Scared of molluscs? Never. That's why we review the latest crop of anime films in this section. Crustaceans and bi-valves are our mates and we'd gladly pet a lobster.

ABC: 37,442*
* Super Play's circulation – measured by the Audit Bureau of Circulation

IRRESPONSIBLE PICTURES

The *Street Fighter II* anime is here! We've settled down with kettle chips and Slurpy-shakes from the local mall and we watched it over and over again. Find out what it's like in this section, as well as catching up on the latest from the Japanese anime film world.

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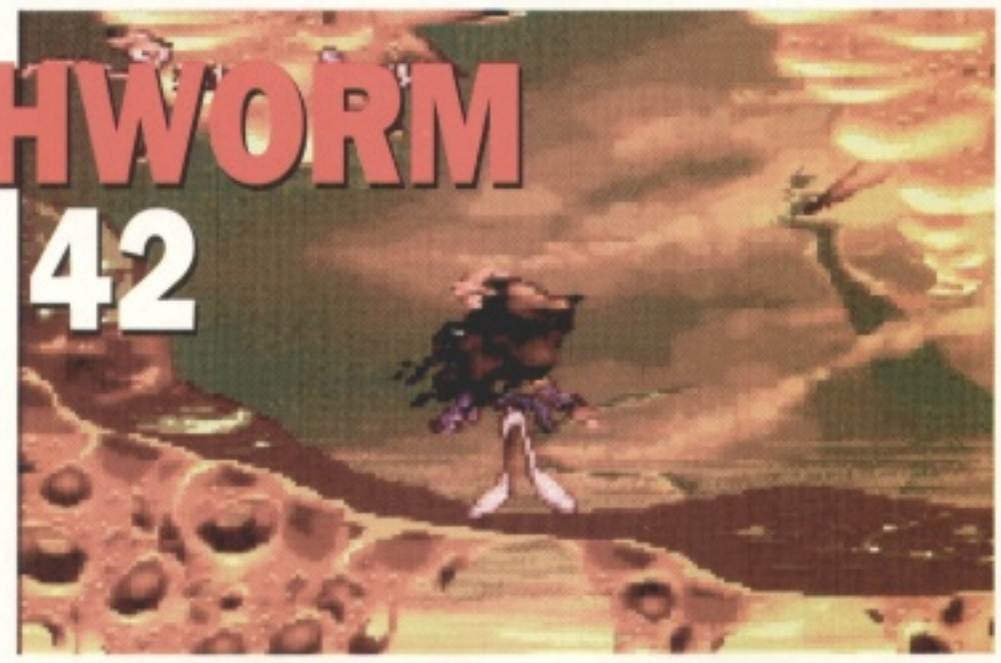
It's won millions of friends and we review it at last. Find out whether it was really worth the wait!



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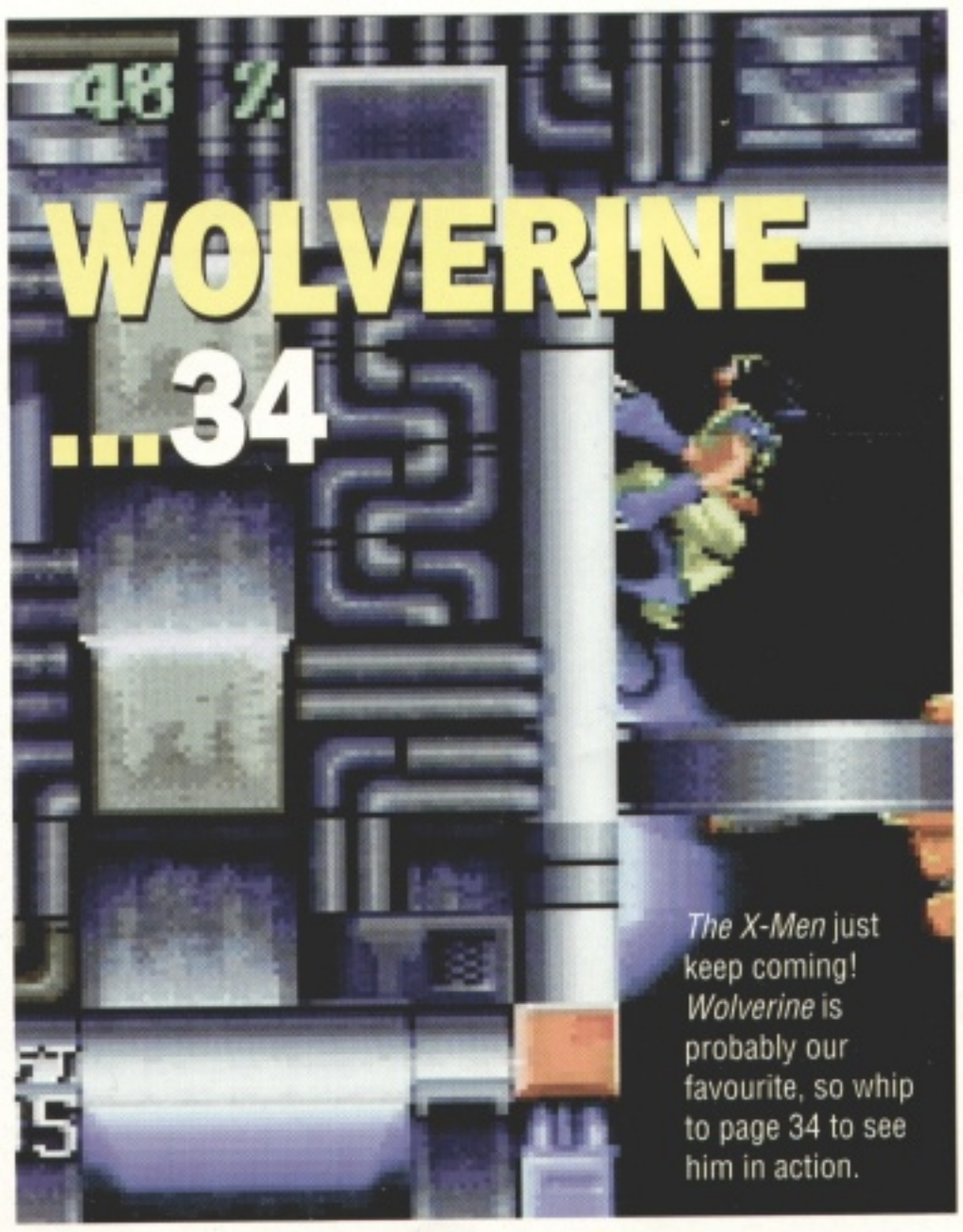

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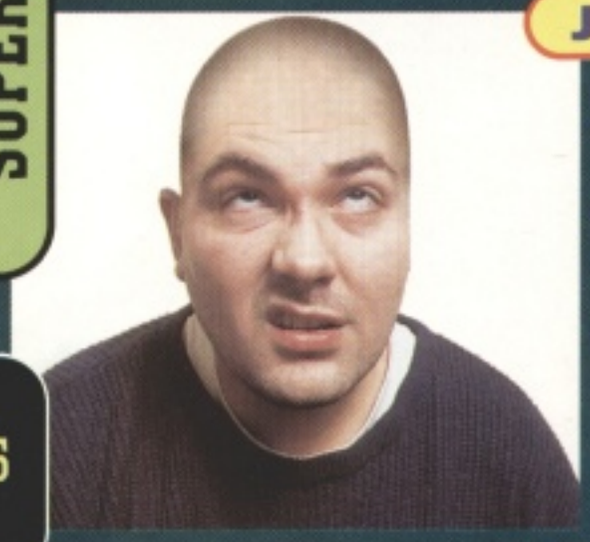
The X-Men just keep coming! *Wolverine* is probably our favourite, so whip to page 34 to see him in action.

SUPER PLAY PROFILES

A quick trip down the barbers for us this month...

James Leach



I wanted to ask for:
A slight trim of the fringe and layers.
But I got confused and accidently asked for:
A Brian Glover.
So now I'm stuck with:
Scaring people in shops and helping out mad professors in castles during thunderstorms.

Ollie Alderton

I wanted to ask for:
A Joe Jackson spike.
But I got confused and accidently asked for:
Michael Jackson (c 1972).
So now I'm stuck with:
A head which looks like a microphone, a huge ad contract with Pepsi, a mansion surrounded by irate parents and a few llamas in the garden.

Debs Cook

I wanted to ask for:
Something sexy.
But I got confused and accidently asked for:
Something sickly.
So now I'm stuck with:
Being followed by sailors waving money and people wanting to make 1940s-style propaganda films. It's quite irritating.

Zy Nicholson

I wanted to ask for:
Something for the weekend.
But I got confused and accidently asked for:
Well, I was 'dreading' it.
So now I'm stuck with:
People confusing me with Drexl from *True Romance*, Radion Automatic and Gregor Fisher (Rab C Nesbitt).

Wil Overton

I wanted to ask for:
A *Dragonball Z* haircut.
But I got confused and accidently asked for:
A James Dean (before *and* after the accident).
So now I'm stuck with:
Going down to Brighton to fight on the sea-front, instead of blasting continents with fireballs, as I'd have preferred.

SUPER

VIVA LAS VEGAS

This month's Super Express has press-stopping news from the Winter Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, which started on January 6. Our jetlagged journalist reports.

When you've seen one Consumer Electronics Show, you've seen them all', as David Warner says wearily to the Master Program in the video-game film Tron. Whilst that may have been true for those expecting the next generation of games consoles, Nintendo stole back some of the limelight by announcing some surprising but highly desirable games lined up for release in 1995.

Indeed, representatives from both Sony and Sega seemed keen to play down the existence of their 32-bit hardware. Although the machines were released in Japan at Christmas, Europe and the US won't see them for many, many months.

Cleverly, Nintendo of America revealed nothing more about the Ultra 64 except to confirm that it was well on schedule for this Autumn. The company's vice president, Peter Main, chose instead to focus on the 16-bit market and the vast number of titles that would be available.

The debatable Virtual Boy was also on show, although the queues forming around the VB stand seemed engineered by a lack of available preview machines to try out rather than any genuine excitement on the part of the showgoers. The same titles seen in Shoshinkai (see last month's round-up) were on display, namely *Teleroboxer*, *Space Pinball* and *Mario Bros VB*. The Veebie's Stateside debut also gave Nintendo a chance to demo two new games: one featured the recognisable Arwing craft from *Starfox* spinning in 3D, albeit unimpressively, whilst the other was a new *Mario* game with a more effective illusion of depth. One notable section featured *Mario* crossing a bridge over a river by moving from foreground to background.

SNES owners were the real winners at WCES, however, as the '95 line-up reveals. The long-awaited *Starfox 2* finally reused its texture-mapped head;

R EXPRESS

Super Play favourite *Super Puyo Puyo* is to get the Nintendo treatment, becoming a *Kirby* game; *Earthbound* sees obscure Japanese RPG *Mother 2* translated; Square USA planned to release its first homegrown game; and literally hundreds more titles were announced by third party publishers.

The glitzy cityscape of Las Vegas. We weren't there, of course, having hired some 'Elvis' bloke to cover the CES.

Starfox 2

Coincidentally, it was exactly two years ago when the first *Starfox* game stunned CES-goers in Las Vegas. The sequel has certainly take its time coming, and continues the adventures of Fox McCloud and his team of anthropomorphic pilots. Using the FX2 chip this time around, *Starfox 2* boasts a lot more in the way of texture-mapping and detail.

A neat little twist is that the Arwing fighters can now morph into 'planetary walkers' in the *Vortex/Transformers* manner. The linearity of the first game has also been addressed, with more freedom of movement in both the individual levels and the order in which you take on those levels.

Another joint venture by Argonaut and Nintendo, *Starfox 2* seems to be suffering the same delays as previous collaborations and is unlikely to be released in the US until August. We'll have more news on this promising follow-up next month.

Now turn to page 9 for a closer look at some of the other software to be found gripping your edge connectors this year.

The split-screen two-player mode shows off the 'Star Raiders' radar grid.

FEAR AND LOATHING – The *Super Play* comment

Nintendo of America acquires a licence for a game; the Game Boy is cosmetically revamped; and a supposedly new FX game is based on an old PC title. Worrying trends that all point to a complete absence of imagination and originality at Nintendo of America, at a time when the company is emerging from under the wing of its Japanese parent. In the circumstances, we could have hoped for a greater demonstration of its trend-setting potential.

Nevertheless, much of the news from CES has seen a half-smile flicker across our cynical jowls. All we can hope for now is that Nintendo UK appreciates the path the market will take this year and gets its act together in bringing the best games over here as quickly as possible. Otherwise it might find its 16-bit release schedules overshadowed by next generation fever.

Above: Ninty's Virtual Boy awaits the critical eye of Western showgoers for the first time.
Below: how many months have *you* been waiting to play the game running on this machine?

Nintendo's stand at the WCES was burning almost as much electricity as the facade of Caesar's Palace...

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CES Software

It wasn't all fun and games at the WCES, but *Super Play* makes a habit of sorting the wheat from the chaff. Here's what we found.

Sturgeon's Law could be applied once more to the line-up of software for the Super Nintendo at CES. 90% of the material on offer was, to be frank, more than a bit pump. But the 10% remaining did hold our attention and – yes! – excite us with its potential. With hundreds of games in the pipeline, that figure of 10% adds up to rather more cartridges than you might suspect. The following highlights indicate our personal favourites...

Square USA is a company we like to keep an eye on, so we were particularly interested by their latest revelation. *Secret Of Evermore* is the first Square game designed and programmed by their new US development team (see our interview with Square's Ted Woolsey in issue 23). Whilst we haven't seen anything of it yet, we have managed to glean some useful facts. A 24-megabit action RPG with a game engine similar to *Secret Of Mana*, it follows the adventures of a teen hero and his dog as they explore the nightmare world of Evermore and seek to restore its balance. Graphically it boasts Mode 7 effects and Silicon Graphics computer-rendered bosses, monsters and backgrounds. There's also an innovation called CinemaText which supposedly gives a smoother display of game text and dialogue.

Worryingly, Square USA tells that the storyline has been 'built from the ground up using references to popular themes in American culture'. Hmm. We're not so enthusiastic about that prospect. Come May we can judge for ourselves, as that is when the game is released in the US.

Stateside releases of *Chrono Trigger* and *Secret Of Mana 2* are also planned for this year, although there's no sign as yet of *Front Mission* or *Final Fantasy V*.

Nintendo/Argonaut's *Starfox 2* was obviously of major interest, partly because any game that takes so long to appear arouses curiosity by default. But the game's two-player split screen mode, the expansion of Fox McCloud's back-up team to eight animals and the manner in which the gameplay quickly switches from tactics and exploration to furious space battle could make this one of the hits of the year. Our only reservations lie in the occasional hint of *Star Raiders*.

NovaLogic's popular helicopter sim *Comanche* is another FX game lined up for your delectation. NoA's vice president Peter Main made so bold as to suggest that 'the screen graphics will immerse players into a totally new gaming experience'. Grammatical errors aside, we tentatively suggest that a knocked-down FX chip version of an old PC game is unlikely to offer such world-shattering sensations. Nevertheless, a couple of *Super Play* team-mates have long bemoaned the lack of a decent flight sim on the SNES and *Comanche* offers 16 megs of airborne warcraft in the seat of an RAH-66 helicopter. 30 new missions have been developed specifically for Nintendo, and the game is for one or two players. Sounds like what we need, frankly.

KIRBY'S AVALANCH

Nintendo • 8 Mbit

After reviewing *Super Puyo Puyo* in *SP*18 and describing it as one of the most 'utterly, utterly addictive' two-player puzzle games ever (Overall score: 91%), we heard from many disappointed readers who couldn't find an importer selling it. Annoyingly, Mega Drive owners could already buy an official UK version of the game which is entitled *Dr Robotnik's Mean Bean Machine*.

So the good news is that Nintendo has officially picked up Banpresto's fast-paced Japanese arcade hit for release in the West. The game does sport a few alterations, however: just as the MD game was 'Robotnikised', so will the SNES game have its Japanese weirdness replaced with round pink fluffiness. We're disappointed by the move, but as there seems to be a solid foundation of real *Puyo* at its core we're not objecting too loudly. We'll miss the blubbing skeleton, though.

The game hits US stores this month. A PAL release is almost certain.

What disappoints us most is that *Kirby* has been chosen to replace the cheeky little Ninji. He hasn't half the talent, frankly.

EARTHBOUND

Nintendo • 16 Mbit

Another American translation of a Japanese game, *Earthbound* is none other than the bizarre Nintendo role-playing game *Mother 2*. We've covered it sporadically in earlier issues, but the truth is we've never quite got to grips with any of it. *Mother 2*, you see, defies description. All we can really tell you about it is that it follows the adventures of a group of schoolchildren after a case of extraterrestrial intervention, and the characters range from mad professors to talking bears. Imagine *Twin Peaks* and the *X Files* for a younger audience, and you'll see why we're unsure it will translate perfectly from the Japanese.

***Mother 2* wasn't actually developed in-house by Nintendo of Japan. We'll be interviewing the charismatic creator behind the game in a forthcoming Fantasy Quest.**

There's an 8-bit smell about these graphics, but we think they merely add to the bizarre Charlie Brown-meets-ET style.

The graphics are eye-openingly unimpressive when compared with recent games but they possess a unique visual style that matches the bizarre storyline. *Earthbound* is due in April in the US.

DIRT RACER SFX

Elite • 4Mbits + FX

Our delight at seeing *Starfox 2* finally make its appearance has been compounded by the good news of yet another SNES cartridge packed with hardware-boosting cleverness. Elite Systems has announced the near-completion of *Dirt Racer SFX*, an off-road racing game with texture-mapped 3D graphics. *Dirt Racer* is the latest game to include the high speed polygon-shuffling Super FX2 chip.

Although it was half-completed, the SNES conversion of Elite's long-expected *Powerslide* rally game was put back because of technical difficulties which would have necessitated the simplification of the game. But Elite's game development team, Motivetime, kept busy despite these setbacks and has come up with another vehicle sim which shows even more potential than *Powerslide*.

Unlike *Stunt Race FX* (Japanese: *Wildtrax*), *Dirt Racer* is a driving game which places the emphasis on authenticity. The programmers were assisted by University research in designing the handling of the cars, which takes into account such realistic factors as suspension, body motion, wheel spin and skidding.

The player can choose from three vehicles: Dune Buggy, 4x4 Monster Truck or Off-Roader. Although the gear changes are automatic (the player selects forward or reverse and holds the button to accelerate), each car has its own inherent strengths and weaknesses and needs to be controlled accordingly.

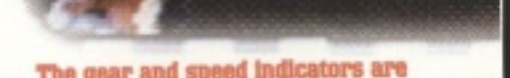
Players are given the choice of entering either league or cup competitions, and a tournament mode allows up to eight players to take part in each. A split screen option facilitates a two player head-to-head, and there's a password system for recording progress in either league or cup. The game also has three difficulty settings. A practice mode in one or two player mode means you can get to know the tracks in your own time.

It's up to you whether you race in the verdant greenery of England, the barren dust of Australia or the slippery snow of Alaska. Each country has five different tracks including puzzle and stunt options, and the FX2 chip provides texture mapping for trees, oil drums and other roadside obstacles.

Elite also boasted that the game has 'intelligent computer opponents with their own personalities'. We naturally asked to meet them for a possible *Super Play* interview, but it transpired that they really meant the CPU cars demonstrated different levels of competence and aggression. Ah well.

Although it's not quite finished, Elite plans to release *Dirt Racer SFX* in May 1995. We look forward to it.

Left: The 4x4 and the Off-Roader engage in a dangerous game of Chicken.



The gear and speed indicators are on-screen rather than boxed off.

We're out in the Australian Bush. In fact, you can see the bush below.

Although the game window occupies less than half the screen, you still get a decent panorama of the action in that vital two-player mode.

We don't know if those texture-mapped fir trees resemble Alaska, but we rather took to them. James has been to Canada but that's as near as we got.

SUPER FX TOO

Despite the cost of placing an FX chip in every cartridge, its use is increasing – though not, perhaps, at the rate originally anticipated by Nintendo. Here's a round-up of the other games that currently boast some FX assistance.

Powerslide
Elite's previously announced rally sim, now shelved. Not to be confused with *Dirt Racer SFX*.

Stunt Race FX
Nintendo's cute 'n' colourful racing game, released last Summer. Tracks and options aplenty but the two-player mode's not quite up to scratch.

Dirt Trax FX
Motocross bike racing game from Electro Brain, due out this year. Races take place in a massive arena, and a 'tag' game option is included. Also not to be confused with *Dirt Racer SFX*.

Starfox
1993's superb but linear 3D shoot-'em-up that plays like some crazy buddy movie with animals in space and a soundtrack to match. An Argonaut/Nintendo joint venture.

Starfox 2
The new adventures of Fox McCloud. See this issue's CES news.

Vortex
Exploration, shooting and puzzles in a transforming mobile suit from Argonaut. Released by Sony last Autumn.

Transformers
More stomping about in a big suit was anticipated, but Electro Brain has shelved this little project too.

FX Fighter
Argonaut's answer to *Virtua Fighter*, due in '95 for release by Nintendo.

But is the FX chip a thing of the past? With the cheaper SA–1 chip now available for inclusion in third-party games, we may see more cartridges that boost the processing power of the SNES in a more economic fashion.

BIKER MICE FROM MARS

More satisfying than a Limburger.

When Biker Mice want to lick the dastardly Dr Limburger, they head straight for the nearest SNICKERS bar.

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The only thing more satisfying than a SNICKERS, is seeing Dr Limburger eat dust as you pass him to reach the finish line first.

Rock and ride down to your nearest stockist because the Biker Mice video game is out now on Super Nintendo. Eek!

KONAMI

SNICKERS

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GANBARE GOEMON 3

Konami • 16Mbit

Konami's *The Legend Of The Mystical Ninja* (known as Goemon in Japan) was a grand exception to the unwritten rule which dictates unashamedly Japanese games to be unsuitable for Western eyes.

Developed in 1991, it featured the widest and weirdest selection of characters and components ever seen in a video game, packed near to bursting with Japanese culture references that were all but lost on the average Western gamer. But at its heart was a game fashioned out of purest gold – a commodity, of course, that could be appreciated universally.

The *Goemon* series continued with a sequel (which has yet to reach these shores officially), and is about to become a trilogy with the release of Goemon 3.

Developers 'Team Goemon Project' (one of Konami's many in-house programming crews) appear to have taken a step backwards in their realisation of this latest adventure. Instead of the fairly strict platform-led action apparent in *2, Goemon 3* cribs from the original during the crux its gameplay. So a touch more exploration is called for, involving many visits to the local townspeople for the collection of clues, advice, and, of course, that vital pair of wicker sandals and an eager chomp at a serving of sushi.

After fulfilling various requirements, the action typically moves onto a platform level, sprinkled heavily with the touches that differentiate Konami's product from more mainstream fodder. A new addition to this section is a map screen, summonable at any time, which details the entire level and its exit points in a simplified form.

Goemon 2 devotees will be pleased to learn that not everything from the second outing has been binned. The giant mecha-piloting sections are still very much in evidence, for example, having been tweaked to make them even more swoon-inducing than they were before.

The Mode 7 sections now feature escape sequences along with the more familiar one-on-one battles. Presented with the characters running out of the screen, it uses a cursor system which works as a guide to the fleeing adventurers, forcing them to duck and dodge as their foe fires off projectile attacks from the rear.

The much loved village-levelling sequences are now viewed with the focus upon the mecha Goemon's head. Now, instead of stomping hapless folk beneath your skates, eye lasers can be summoned – or a swift uppercut delivered – to down approaching bad guys.

Goemon (Kid Ying in the US/UK versions) and Ibisumaru (Dr Yang) have lost their companion, Sasuke, from the second game – she's been replaced by a female ninja character who until now has made only cameo appearances in the series. Only Kid and Doc will be controllable from the outset, the intention being that as the quest develops, the gameplay itself will open out and become freer in scope.

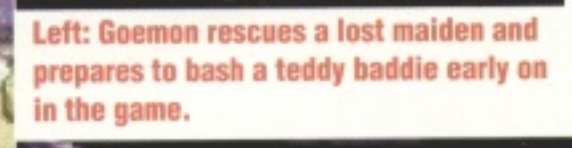
From what *Super Play* has seen so far, the game looks to maintain Konami's unrivalled level of professionalism and polish, although it's perhaps disappointing that aside from the mecha environments, there aren't really any new features to report. Still, there's little doubt that the game will be build on a solid base of playability, with many layers of Japanese humour and clever programming touches worked into the mix for good measure.

Goemon 2 has become one of the biggest-selling Japanese import carts of recent years and it's likely that *3* will garner similar levels of interest. It's worth mentioning, however, that the game's slant towards exploration and adventure will render progress hard work due to its wealth of Japanese text. It's doubtful that Konami will manage an official release, so until next month's full, in-depth look at the import version, hold on to those folding brown ones...

Left: Goemon's rather stupid sidekick Ibisumaru can often be relied on to provide some good belly laughs.

Above: Although *Goemon 3* relies a lot on exploration...

... there's still more than enough time for challenging platform levels (Right).



Left: Goemon rescues a lost maiden and prepares to bash a teddy baddie early on in the game.

The Tanuki (left) and the Mecha Goemon head (right) serve as warp points between the overhead and platform sections of the game.

FANTA

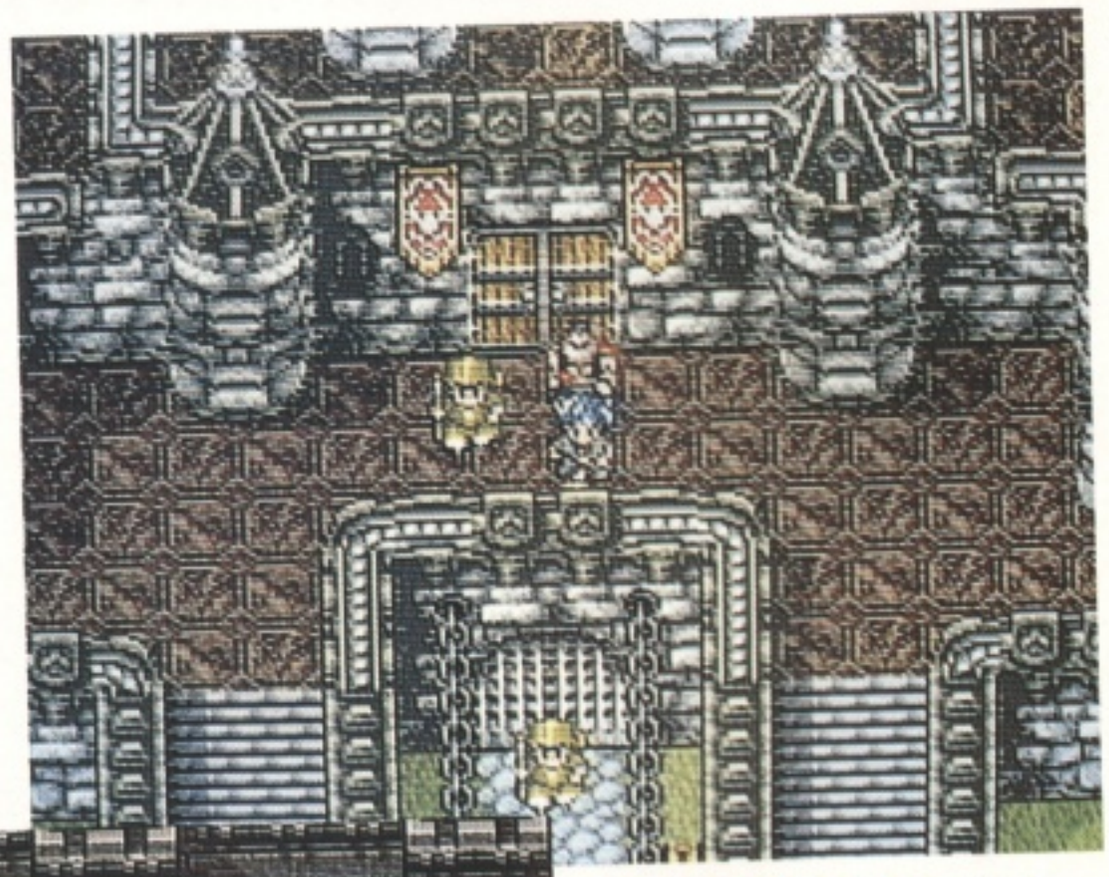
Here's number Six – but who is Number One? Is it Square, or is it Enix? We want information. Information...

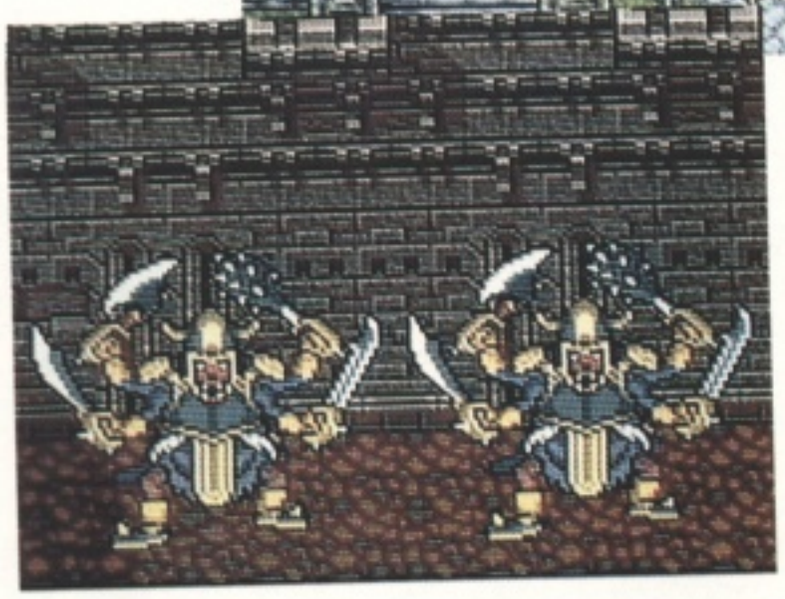
DRAGON QUEST VI

Enix ● 32 meg

The release date of *Dragon Quest VI* from Enix is still being kept a mystery, but nobody will be too surprised if it appears at the same time as Square's *Chrono Trigger*. In fact, nothing has served to illustrate better the rivalry between the two Japanese RPG companies. Whilst the *Dragon Quest* series has been seriously challenged by the likes of *Final Fantasy* in recent times, there's still enough of a following for *DQ* to guarantee the success of the latest instalment. According to the Japanese press, *Dragon Quest VI* is one of the most eagerly awaited games of 1995.

The game's original character designer is Akira Toriyama, who recently 'swapped sides' and extended the services of his Bird Studio to Square for the purpose of designing *Chrono Trigger* (see Fantasy Quest in *SP*27). It was in similar circumstances that Yuuji Horii, the writer and designer of *DQVI*, was revealed to be working for Square to work on *Chrono Trigger*. This may explain some of the similarities between the two games that are now becoming apparent. *Dragon Quest VI's* musical score is the work of Kouichi Sugiyama. At the very least, these three big names reassure us that *DQVI* will be a quality RPG.





Whilst the graphics have improved, scenes like this cavern (above) are still a little blocky compared to the more natural contours of *FFVI*. And the monsters (left) aren't exactly Kintaro.

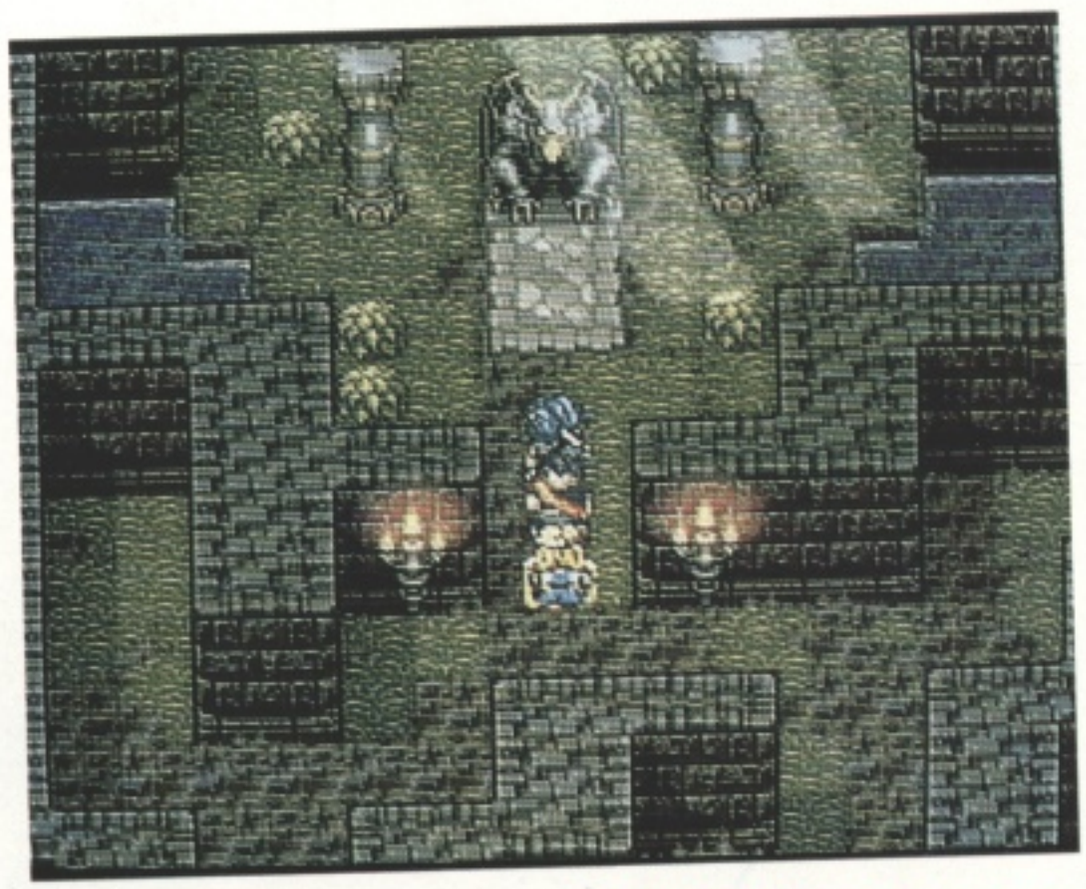
The game features some enormous improvements over past *Quests*, although it does draw a little on *Dragon Quest III*. The major feature of *DQVI* is its system of character occupation. In a similar fashion to *DQIII* you will be able to choose the occupation of your characters from 15 predetermined classes. Even NPCs (including monster allies) can be given a class of your choice. This occupation system allows the player to create a party with strengths and weaknesses according to their own individual preference, more in the style of a Western dungeon bash.

Secondly, the game world is much bigger than ever before. Your adventure takes place over two continents, each radically different from the other, thus guaranteeing a longer playing time with a lot more exploring and travelling to do.

LITTLE BLUE BLOBS

The other new feature which is common knowledge at this stage is the monster and enemy animation. Many of the monsters fight in a highly comical way and they all have many more attacks than previous games, as well as more special moves and effects. For fans of the previous games, Slim is back in *Dragon Quest VI*, but most of the cast are new faces. Here is the clearest indication that Enix is at last reacting to the competition: *Dragon Quest V*, in contrast, was very dowdy and simplistic when compared with contemporaries like *Breath Of Fire* back in 1993.

The set-up is simple but beguiling; three brave adventurers – on hearing the voices of ghosts – ride

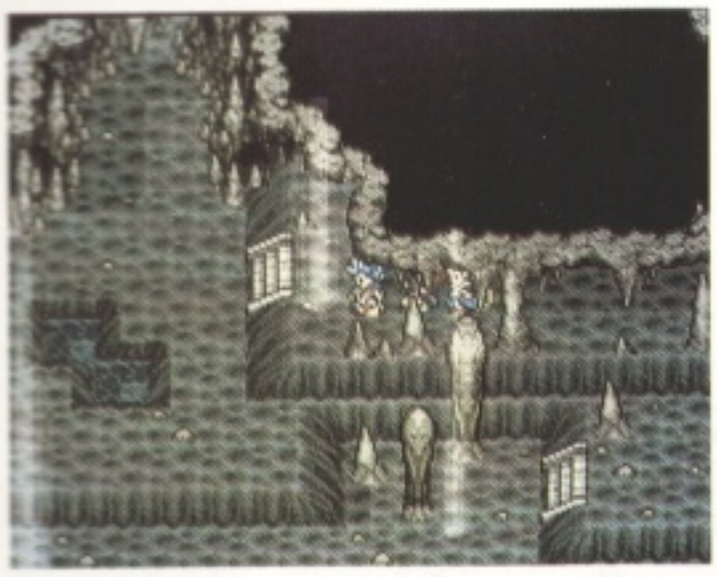


Our party of adventurers enters a maze illuminated by flickering torches.

This Dragon Rider crops up in the intro sequence of the game.

ASY QUEST

by Nic di Costanzo and Zy Nicholson

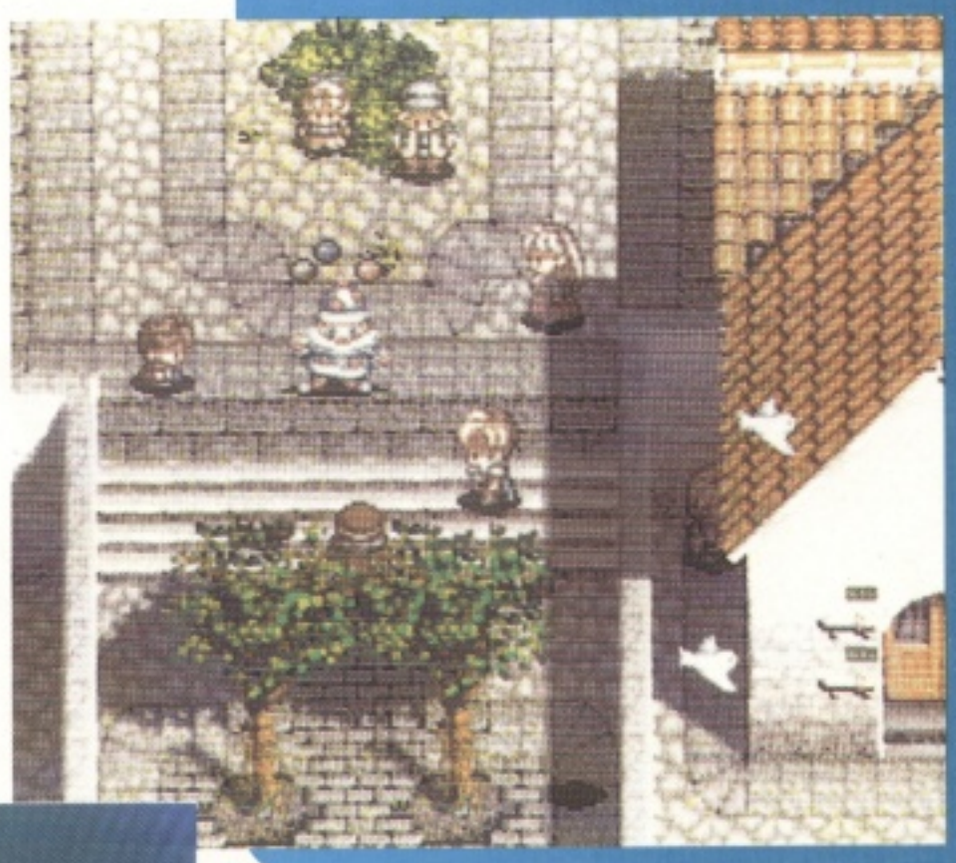


In Summer of 1993, thousands of people queued up in the streets of Tokyo to buy *Dragon Quest V* on its day of release. Will we see the same for *DQVI*, we wonder?

three golden dragons to the huge, mysterious castle where their quest really begins.

The main character is a young lad who is the instigator of this somewhat haphazard adventure, and he is joined by Barbara, a denizen of Carvelona – the legendary magic city. Mireille is a former fortune teller's assistant; Hassan is a fighter who apparently boasts of killing a giant bear using just his hands. Chamoro is another young chap, but one who grew up, Tarzan-like, in a forest, being reared by the kindly animals therein. And finally there's the prosaically-named Terry, who has spent all his years learning every sword technique around the world, and is thus a bit handy with a blade.

Although *Dragon Quest V* was destined for a US translation it never appeared, and Enix of America has shown more interest in releasing action games like *Actraiser 2* and *Illusion Of Gaia over the past year. After the American* chart success of the turn-based *FFVI*, though, it's likely that *DQVI* will finally make its way to the West. And thence to the UK? Well, it looks like a long wait but it might well happen. Nintendo UK has already shown its interest with Enix's *Illusion Of Gaia*, so don't rule it out.



Love, death and pigeon-fancying. By 'eck.

TALE PHANTASIA

Namco ● 32 meg

With Namco's *Ridge Racer* now causing a frenzy on the PlayStation, the big Japanese games company seems to be looking forward to a year of success on the next generation of consoles. But it hasn't neglected the 16-bit market, and its latest venture lives up to the company reputation of breaking new ground in software technique.

Tale Phantasia utilises a new type of sound driver program which enables the game's characters to speak when they perform special attacks or magical incantations. More than one hundred different sentences have been stored in the 32-meg cartridge. Namco has also tried to make the user interface as simple and enjoyable as possible.

The setting of the game is, once again, a western medieval milieu, but it features the most unlikely character names ever. Hero Rik teams up with his friends Bram Parade, Mint and Ache to thwart the world-dominating efforts of the evil King Dao.

In all other respects *Tale Phantasia* appears to be an average turn-based Japanese RPG. Whether it can provide something deeper beyond the gimmick of speech remains to be seen.

Could this be the first chat game on the SNES?

It's those little numbers above your head again, but the battle animations are something special.

The turn-based combat system may deter action fans, but it's the storyline that keeps the fans hooked on *DQ*.

Ogres To Roam America

Enix of America recently announced that it has acquired the rights to *Quest's Ogre Battle*, the strategy RPG/wargame that first appeared in Japan in 1993, for an English translation. A release date hasn't been confirmed but it marks a considerable change in the company's view of the American market, for which it has previously concentrated on action games. Approximately 40% of US homes possess a Super Nintendo, and this title is likely to appeal to the considerable number of maturer players in those households.

Sadly there's still no news regarding a translation of the sequel, *Tactics Ogre*, which has yet to be released in Japan but already boasts graphics and sound on a par with Square's *Front Mission*.

FANHUNTER

YOU'LL FIND NO FINER FANZINES

By Zy Nicholson

Time once again for the Fanhunter to spread his cape and cast a fateful shadow across the seedy underworld of gamefans who write about their experiences. Isn't it romantic?

Do you own *Super Tetris?* If you do, a mysterious figure known only as 'The Toe' (hey, that sounds familiar...) is willing to help you – for a price. *The Unofficial Tetris Tips* booklet consists of forty typed black-and-white pages of advice intended to help you conquer Alexei Pajitnov's furiously good puzzle game. Of course, it's debatable that the skills required for *Tetris* mastery can be taught through simple hints and tips: it's not as if there are secret levels or pad techniques involved, and no amount of information can replace good old-fashioned playing experience. But what's here is practical and illustrated, so you might well have a look.

US fanzine *Shining Forth* got a big response after we covered its preview edition, so editor and expatriate Aussie Robert Schmitz is keen to produce many more on a regular basis. Dedicated to the RPG scene, the zine is coming along splendidly and should develop as a forum for fans of the genre. This latest issue covers recent US releases, tips for *Final Fantasy III* and *Breath Of Fire* and a little bit of news. Excellent stuff, but why isn't somebody producing a similar fanzine over here?

The *Rabid Newt* accurately describes itself as a photocopied comic rather than a fanzine, and for that reason I'm not about to recommend to every SNES owner that they rush out and buy it. But it strikes me that artist and writer Richard Smith is keen to draw and eager to get his work seen, so here's a suggestion: if you're a fanzine editor whose attempts at artwork offend the eye, why not ask somebody like Richard to liven up your issue with a couple of cartoon-style illustrations? Judging from the impossible number of requests put to our Wil, it seems the hobby is in need of a few fan artists. Here's a likely candidate.

Shining Forth – contact P.O. Box 98, Yorkville NY, 13495 USA. Or e-mail Robert Schmitz at zoloat@aol.com.

Tetris Tips – the princely sum of £2.50 plus 50p post and packing (overseas orders add £5), cheques and postal orders made payable to Tetris Tips, PO Box 86, Stockport, Cheshire SK5 6TG. Not sure it's worth that much, to be honest, but get in touch anyway.

The Rabid Newt – a round £1 to be delivered unto Richard Smith at Flat 2, 26 Manchester Road, Thurlstone, Sheffield S30 6QT.

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IT'S... THE SUPER QUIZ

From the outer limits of space and the vastness of time comes a race of beings with unimaginable powers. Called the Atomic Warriors, they are led by Kuuri Vex-Häna, known to all three Dustworld systems as the Atom Lord of Destruction. And as we speak he's piloting his Molecular Galleon towards Earth. Run to the hills! Flee!
We will be wiped out once he gets here...!

EASY

1. What's the name of the medieval *Lemmings* lookalike from Jaleco?
2. Who wears the dungarees in *Super Punch Out!!?*
3. How much does he weigh?

MEDIUM

1. What's the frog in *Hebereke's Popoon* called?
2. Who publishes *Nosferatu?*
3. In which game would you find Galford?

HARD

1. Who is Pentaro?
2. What do we know Child Body as, more commonly?
3. Who created the anime *Blue Seed?*

Whoosh! Oh. Er, it appears that the Atom Lord has gone straight past Earth and is heading for the Sun now. Thump! That's the end of his Molecular Galleon. What a waste of time. He might at least have fried large portions of Asia and boiled the seas on his way past. What a swizz.

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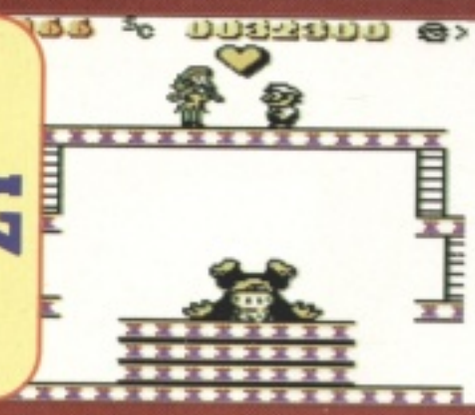
SUPER PLAY'S HOT LIST

What games have we recently been downloading into our brains via our eyes and ears?

JAMES

Donkey Kong Country. What else? It's a full meal to a starving man. A soothing cream to someone with blisters. A hot bath to a marathon runner. A long sip of iced water to a vindaloo-eater. Truly a game for all seasons and all weather conditions.

ZY



Donkey Kong Country's all right I suppose, but in the last couple of months I've got into *Donkey Kong '94* on the Super Game Boy. A classic, it still plays sweetly today. And, of course, there's that old nostalgic feeling. It's enough to make a grown man's eyes leak.

OLLIE

I've chosen *Micro Machines* because I was strangely drawn to the driver-characters (themselves, strangely drawn, I might add). Once I started to play, memories of childhood came flooding back. School hols, bike rides and getting locked in the cupboard for being rude to Mrs Howlett.

DEBS

With all the fuss about *Starfox 2,* I returned to the original to see what all the fuss was about. And indeed, now I see what all the fuss is about. Impressive graphics and gameplay are one thing, though, but the best feature is the motley selection of animals which fly the ships.

WIL

Final Fantasy III. What else (*Donkey Kong Country, perhaps? – Ed.*) (*Er... I think not – Wil.*). The sheer scale of the game combined with the great puzzles and marvellous playability make it a total entertainment experience which I just can't drag myself away from. Not even for a minute.

...and the game we definitely haven't been playing this month

Rise of the Robots. Artificial intelligence? If this cart had any intelligence, it'd refuse to fit into your SNES and instead would sulk in the corner, red-faced at the lack of gameplay and the amount of hype.

CARTOGRAPHY

So you've just bought a SNES in the sales, or you got one for Christmas and you're still feeling like a newcomer to the scene. It could be that you're bruising your knees in the slippery slidey ice-world of fact. If so, here's our bluffer's guide to the SNES.

Adaptor – a device which lets games from one country run on a Super NES from another (see 'grey import').

Battery Back-Up (BB) – Some cartridges contain a battery-powered memory chip which saves your high scores or game position, even if you switch off the SNES. The battery lasts for about five years.

Beat-'em-up – one of those jolly popular fighting games.

Bit – a one or a zero. Put 8,000,000 of them together in the right order and you have the average SNES game.

Cart – abbreviation for cartridge.

CPU – Central Processing Unit, the chip at the heart of any computer. Inside your SNES is a 65sc816, running at 3.58MHz.

Custom chip – besides the CPU, your SNES contains an array of specially made chips dedicated to tasks like graphics or sound.

Developer – the team of designers, programmers and beardy-weirdy types who actually create a video game from scratch.

DSP – Digital Signal Processor. This secondary processor is included in some games like *Mario Kart* to improve the speed and graphics.

Super FX chip – like the DSP, this assists the SNES with calculating 3D graphics.

Grey Import – a US or Japanese game which requires an appropriate adaptor to run on a UK Super Nintendo. These cartridges aren't officially released by British publishers, and as such Nintendo UK does not approve of them or their use. Fortunately, the European SNES market has grown sufficiently in recent years for the majority of big games to get an official UK release, although many titles arrive here long after they've become available overseas. It's also a great shame that some games (like *Goemon 2, Puyo Puyo* and *Final Fantasy II*) have never been released in the UK at all.

Importer – a small business which trades in games or merchandise from overseas.

Licence – a deal struck by a publisher which allows them to base a game on some existing product (be it film, book, comic, TV show or other). For example, Virgin's *Aladdin* is a licenced game that borrows characters and scenarios from the popular Disney film.

Market – a weekly assembly of grocery stalls, run by small traders and often occupying a town square. Also a business term for the group of potential buyers for a particular product. We normally use the term in its latter sense, but stay on your toes.

Megabit – a million bits, abbreviated Mbit. The deceptive measurement of the size of Super Nintendo cartridges.

Megabyte – a million bytes. There are eight megabits in one megabyte.

Mode 7 – a unique SNES feature that allows scaling and rotation of the screen. That is, when things whizz in and out. And sometimes round and round. Unregulated use of Mode 7 has been known to induce nausea in our editor.

NES – Nintendo Entertainment System. The 8-bit console from Nintendo that preceded the SNES.

NPC – non-player character. An independent personality in an RPG with whom you can interact but not control.

NTSC – The standard for TV signals in the US and Japan, which updates the screen image 60 times a second (60Hz). It's faster than PAL, but has fewer lines on screen.

PAL – the standard for TV signals in the UK and Hong Kong, which updates the screen fifty times per second (50Hz) and has 625 lines per screen. The PAL Super Nintendo runs slower than its NTSC counterpart and has large black borders around the picture.

Palette – the number of colours the SNES can use in its graphics. The SNES has a palette of 32,768 colours, but it can only show 256 different colours on screen at one time.

Parallax scrolling – the process wherein different parts of the background move at different speeds, giving the impression of depth and distance.

Pixel – no. Every bloody glossary tells you what a pixel is. Even Grandad, who fought in both wars, knows what a pixel is. So don't look in our glossary for it, matey.

Platform game – what links apparently diverse titles like *Mario World, Flashback* and *Donkey Kong Country* is that they all have a central character who runs and jumps about in a multi-level environment on screen.

Polygon – a many-sided geometric shape, yes, but it's important in video game graphics. A complex 3D shape with apparent depth can be built up from thousands of simpler geometric shapes.

Publisher – any company that sells Super Nintendo games under its own name, quite simply. The publisher is often a different company to the developer, unless they have in-house development teams.

RISC – acronym for Reduced Instruction Set Computing. The principle of RISC processing is that it achieves greater speed through simplification.

RPG – abbreviation for roleplaying games. In computer terms, this broad category covers everything from *Dungeon Master* to the *Legend of Zelda:* many of them are derived from paper-and-dice RPGs like TSR's *Dungeons and Dragons.*

SCART – a 21-pin standard for television signals. If you have a compatible TV you can connect your SNES to its SCART socket for a better picture. SCART bypasses all the irrelevant electronics that decipher TV programmes from Radio Frequency signals, using the TV more like a monitor. Sometimes called the Euroconnector standard over here.

Scrolling – the process where the background moves across the screen, rather like a movie camera panning.

Seal of Quality – all carts carry this, which supposedly indicates that Nintendo has tested the game for everything from program bugs to game content. But this doesn't guarantee its playability, alas (or we'd be out of a job. Phew).

Sim – abbreviation for simulation, as in flight simulation, racing simulation, even air traffic control simulation. 'God-Sim' is the term for games like *Populous* and *Sim City,* where you control and determine events from some transcendent overview.

Super Famicom – the name of the Japanese Super Nintendo. Famicom stands for 'family computer'.

Third Party – Nintendo doesn't write every Super Nintendo game on its own, you know. Many of them originate from other companies like Capcom, Konami and Acclaim, who make their profits purely from the software they sell. A third-party publisher is anyone who produces Nintendo games but isn't Nintendo, quite simply.

Ultra 64 – The 64-bit 'next generation' console due from Nintendo this year.

Zumbooruk – a small swivel-mounted cannon, carried on the back of a camel. Okay, so we were caught short in the Z department.

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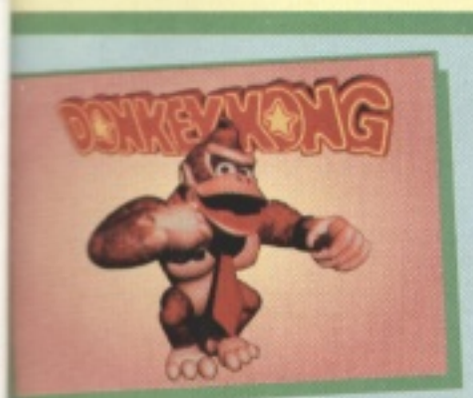

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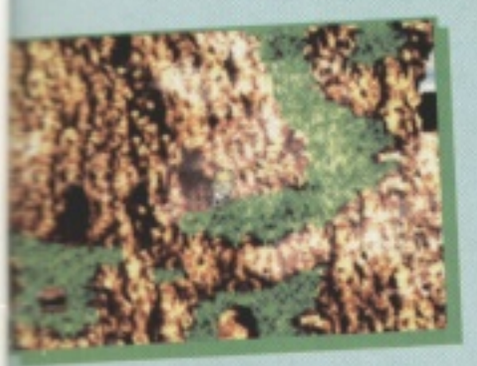

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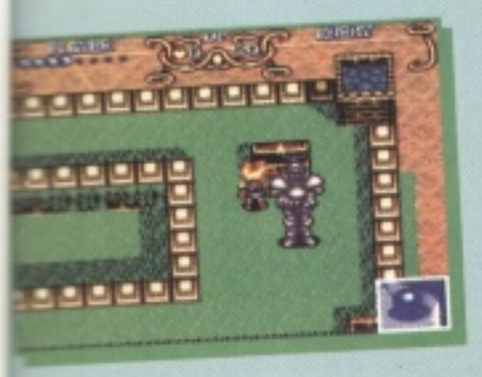

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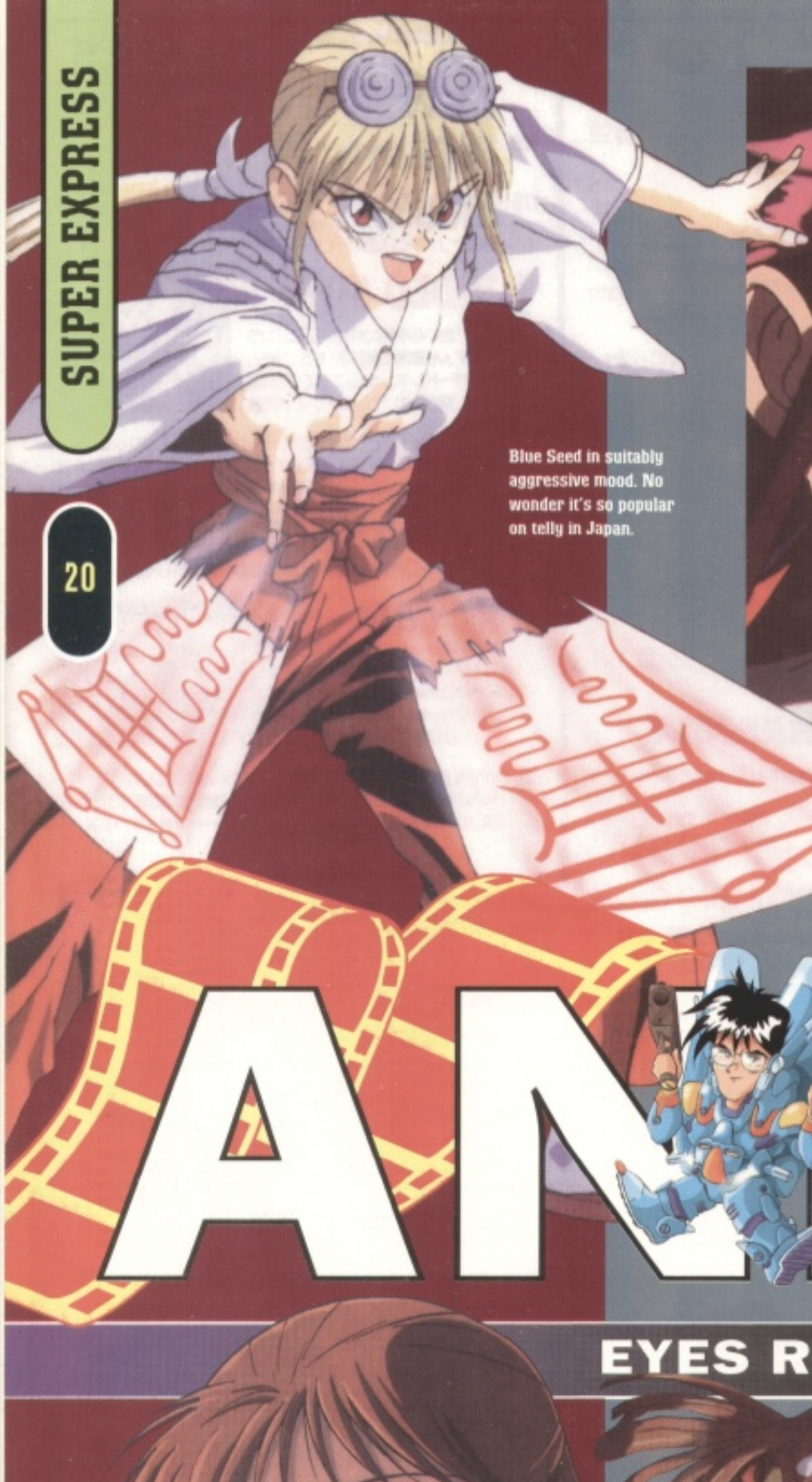
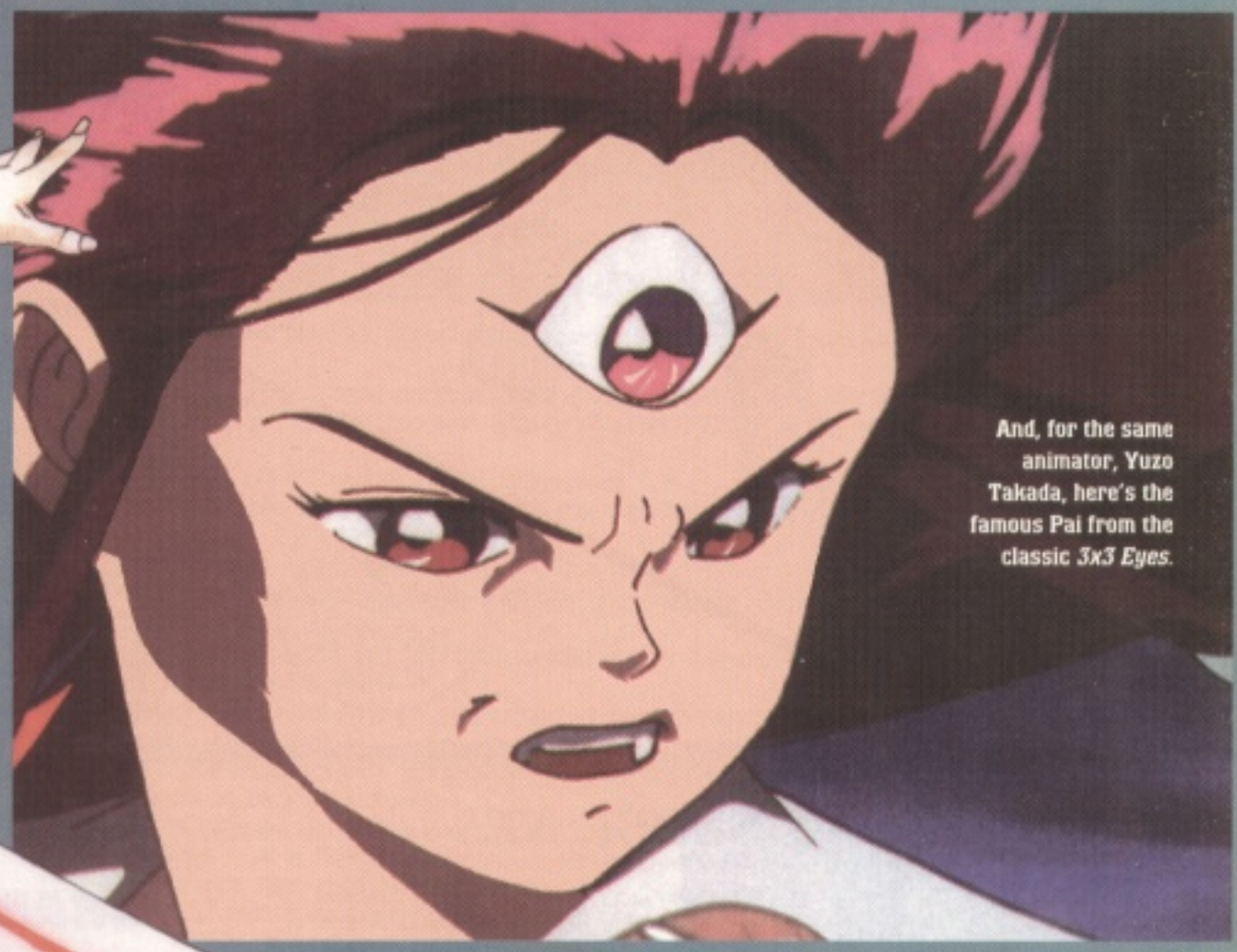


Blue Seed in suitably aggressive mood. No wonder it's so popular on telly in Japan.



And, for the same animator, Yuzo Takada, here's the famous Pai from the classic *3x3 Eyes*.

AUK win an award and Manga sell a million!

ANIME WORLD

EYES RIGHT

Blue Seed, featuring the most common anime theme - a schoolgirl with the traditional sailor outfit on. Don't they all look so cute?

ISSUE 29

MARCH 1995

by P J Evans

Well, Christmas is long since past. The food has been eaten, the drink has been drunk, and the final few balloons look shrivelled and vaguely obscene in the corners of the room. But don't put away your dancing trousers just yet: *Anime UK* and Manga Publishing, two vast supporting pillars between which is slung the swaying suspension bridge of British anime fandom, both have something to celebrate.

First round of congrats go to the *AUK* crew, one of the coolest groups of people ever to peel a banana. At the Anime America 1994 convention over in the US, *AUK* magazine was awarded the Osamu Tezuka award for best English-language magazine anywhere ever. The late and great Tezuka, as most of you

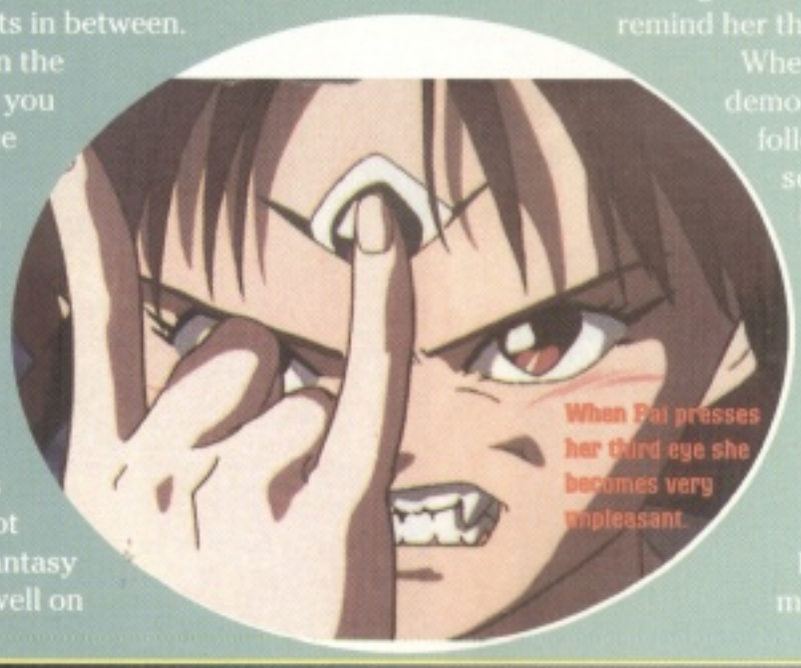
Pai once more, looking somewhat sweeter. *3x3 Eyes* has been a big seller in the UK, and was one of the earlier anime releases.

will know already, is regarded as the father of Japanese animation. His influence is such that he is often referred to as 'The Japanese Disney', possibly because his 1980 epic *Phoenix 2772* had great chunks of *Fantasia* in it. The Disney corporation had their revenge by ripping off Tezuka's *Kimba The White Lion* to make *The Lion King*. The Tezuka award is an honour indeed, so a big hand for the *AUK* team for scooping it. And in the red corner we have Manga Publishing, who recently celebrated their millionth sale. Yes, that's the big ten-to-the-sixth, one million anime videos sold since the release of *Akira*. This is a phenomenal number – most video companies would sell large parts of their anatomy to get sales figures like that. Even more surprising is that all those zeros come from effectively one kind of video, and that – compared to more established companies – Manga are a wide-eyed newcomer with a handful of titles. No wonder they're partying. It must be said that *AUK* and Manga are not exactly on the same side of the river when it comes to what they do and how they do it. Remember, ladies and gentlemen: take no sides. Competition is good, but enmity and paranoia are bad.

Leaping nimbly from the soapbox, we find ourselves once again in the brilliantly-hued embrace of *Newtype* magazine. A couple of columns ago I opined that the best information comes not from the mag's rather gaudy (My eyes! My eyes!) feature, but from the adverts and bits in between. Concentrate on the colour, and all you find out is what the voice actresses on *Blue Seed*, *Magical Knight Rayearth*, and *Macross 7* look like (yes, of course they're cute! What did you expect?). Hunt among the dull yellow bits on page 42, however, and there's some good news for Yuzo Takada fans: not only is his bio-science fantasy *Blue Seed* doing rather well on TV, but *3x3 Eyes* part two is in production, and should hit Japanese shelves in early 1995. I am rather pleased about this, in the same way that Arnold Schwarzenegger is rather a big lad. The original four-parter struck a good balance between cute and mean, with a split-personality heroine and some funky ethnicity to boot. It was even a pretty good dub, but did leave the story on a slight cliffhanger. More of the same, if it's done right, would make me a very happy man indeed.

The closing moments of the last series left our two-for-the-price-of-one Tibetan in a slightly nasty spot, having been apparently blown to atoms in a one-on-one with Venares, Kai Yan Wang's personal zombie. Yakumo Fuji was last seen heading yonder (ever wondered exactly where 'yonder' is? Me neither) on a train, knowing that Pai must be alive somewhere and vowing to find her. If the new series follows Yuzo Takada's manga (and, judging by *Newtype's* production drawings, this seems likely), the story will pick up some months – or even years, given the immortal nature of most of the characters – later, when Yakumo returns to Japan after fruitlessly searching the world for Pai. By the time he returns to his homeland, the young zombie has just about seen it all, and learned some useful new tricks in the process; conjuring the invisible To-Chau bugs, for example. His wanderings take him to a local school, where one of the girls looks oddly familiar... It's Pai, cute of face and blank of memory, firmly believing she is just another Human schoolgirl. Bit unfair of Yakumo to remind her that she isn't, really.

Where zombies tread, demonic mayhem is sure to follow, and no doubt the series will have enough bits coming off Yakumo to make him seriously consider investing in a staple gun. The drawings show new designs for Pai, Yakumo, Ling-Ling Lee, and Venares, and a hooded chap who just might be the dreaded Kai Yan Wang, so it looks like the gang are all back. Let's hope that Manga or some such picks this one up fast. And would it be possible for Streamline to handle the dub again?



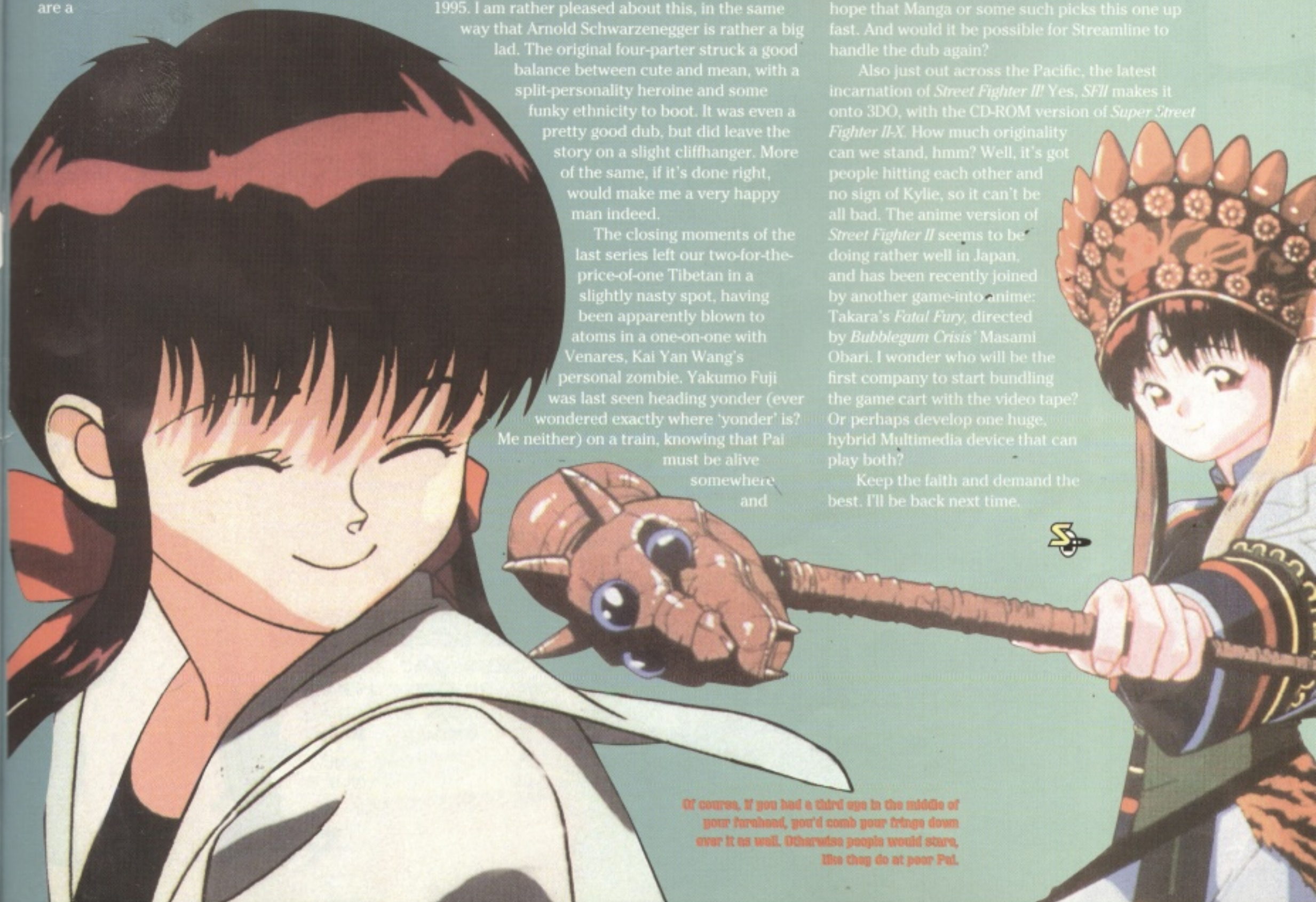
When Pai presses her third eye she becomes very unpleasant.

ANIME CONTACT

Anime UK magazine, 70 Mortimer Street, London W1. £3.50 from good SF/comic shops, also available mail order from the publishers.

Also just out across the Pacific, the latest incarnation of *Street Fighter II!* Yes, *SFII* makes it onto 3DO, with the CD-ROM version of *Super Street Fighter II-X*. How much originality can we stand, hmm? Well, it's got people hitting each other and no sign of Kylie, so it can't be all bad. The anime version of *Street Fighter II* seems to be doing rather well in Japan, and has been recently joined by another game-into-anime: Takara's *Fatal Fury*, directed by *Bubblegum Crisis'* Masami Obari. I wonder who will be the first company to start bundling the game cart with the video tape? Or perhaps develop one huge, hybrid Multimedia device that can play both?

Keep the faith and demand the best. I'll be back next time.



Of course, if you had a third eye in the middle of your forehead, you'd comb your fringe down over it as well. Otherwise people would stare, like they do at poor Pai.

Is this
really as
good
as ***Virtua Fighter?***

Toh Shin Den: another **Edge** first

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SUPER BOMBERMAN 3

Hudsonsoft • 12 Mbit

A Siberian salt mine seems to be the basis for this battle mode screen.

Multitap mayhem doesn't get much better than *Bomberman*: now a third version of the game is on its way. The story mode that started in the original and was emphasised in *SB2* is here, with even further refinements.

Five bombermen are on the way to conquer Earth, and you're the last line of defence. In addition to the five bad bombermen, there's a new boss called Bagula to defeat. What's more, you have a friend to help you: he's player or CPU controlled, and he's called Lui. He's not a bomberman, and his characteristics can be chosen at the start of the game. His special abilities include being able to jump over walls, and allowing the other bomberman to ride on his back as he does so.

The battle mode now supports five players rather than four, and features a new option to let you pick the style of bomberman you want, from a menu of eight. We weren't as keen on *SB2* because it dispensed with some great strategies from the first game, but this could be its saving grace. The VS option is retained from No 2, so it's possible to have battles of two players versus two, three versus two or four versus one.

Late news just in is that Hudsonsoft is creating a new *Gunhed/Super Aleste* shoot-'em-up for the SNES too. Viewed from overhead, your ship has a new dimension of movement into and out of the screen which means that you can choose to fly under or over bridges and clouds. Sounds rather desirable to us, so watch out for more news.

Bubble-gum machines threaten world security.

'007 IS WORKING FOR NINTENDO', SAYS MI5

The super spy will début on the Super Nintendo when James Bond, Ian Fleming's literary creation, appears in his own game this year.

Nintendo of America has just announced the signing of a deal which allows them to create a game based on the latest cinematic adventures of 007. The film in question, currently titled Goldeneye, will star *Remington Steele's* Pierce Brosnan.

This is an unprecedented step for Nintendo, who have never before managed to acquired a licence on which to base an officially developed game. Tie-ins and licences, especially of movies, have proved popular with major third-party publishers like Ocean and Acclaim, but Nintendo has always been responsible for original characters and scenarios.

Heading the design and development of the game is Rare Ltd, the UK company behind Christmas hit *Donkey Kong Country*. *Goldeneye* will be created using the same Silicon Graphics workstations that gave *DKC* its glorious pre-rendered sprites. It's also been revealed that the deal allows Nintendo to use the image of Pierce Brosnan in the game. Although details are scarce the smart money is currently wagering on some form of platformer, incorporating a rotoscoped and rendered Brosnan as the main character.

Goldeneye on the SNES won't appear until Christmas 1995, when it will coincide with the film's release. But can it overcome the troubles of previous licences? Let's look at the heinous scales of iniquity...

SOME TERRIBLE FILM LICENSES

Cliffhanger
Last Action Hero
Super Back To The Future 2
T2: Judgement Day
RoboCop
The Wizard Of Oz

SOME REASONABLE FILM LICENSES

Super Star Wars, Jurassic Park, Er...

In the meantime, rumours abound that Rare has been working on a version of *Mario Kart* which will also feature *DKC*-style pre-rendered sprites and will appear on the SNES during the Summer months. Although this story remains unconfirmed, it seems a likely bet that other established Nintendo characters will get the Rare treatment.

COMPETITION WINNERS

Remember that panel compo a few issues back, where we asked which film the line 'If you are lying, I'll be back' is from? Well, er, unbeknownst to us, there are two films. One is *Twins* (which is the film we took the quote from), but apparently the line occurs in a natty little fable called *The Exterminator*.

So in the interests of fairness, we bunged cards with either film into the *Super Play* flat cap and pulled out a winner, who'll be receiving *NBA Jam*. It is James Nott of beautiful Stratford-upon-Avon.

And while we're about it, let's also select a winner from the other recent panel compo. The line is 'You know how I love money'. We had a pitiful response for this one. In fact, there are only two entries in the box at the moment. Runner up is from Erik Hanson of Southampton (cheers – you sent in 50% of the correct answers). Winner is Mike Mallory of Plymouth who'll be getting *Vortex* in a wee bit.

The film? Why it's *The King Of New York*, starring top actor and honorary *Super Play* editor, Christopher Walken.

Thanks for all the entries to the panel compos. And keep an eye out for lots more compos coming soon!

WARIO'S WOODS

Nintendo

Are you fed up of *Tetris* yet? As mentioned in the *Wildsnake* review on page 40, it's tough to improve on such a near-perfect idea and game, but various publishers still try.

Wario's Woods is one such variation. You, as Toad (from the *Mario* games) must arrange coloured square creatures in arrangements of three (either horizontally, vertically or diagonally) and then detonate them with bombs (which fall as well as the creatures). The bombs must be the same colour as the line of three creatures, though, which makes things trickier. Also the way Toad moves around the screen is more complex than simplt moving and rotating the creatures as they fall.

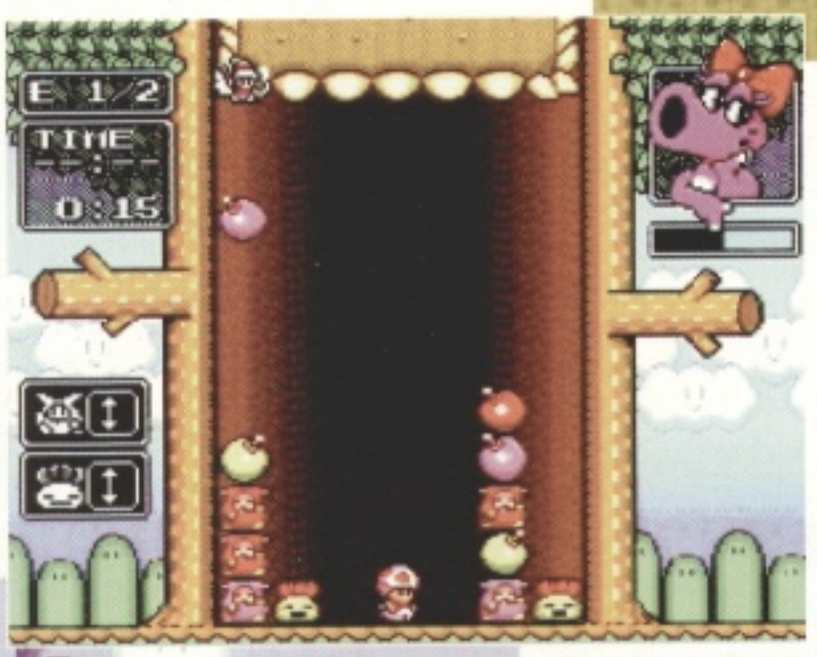
It's a tough game to master, from what we've seen; the CPU plays a mean game, and, unsurprisingly, has total and rapid mastery over Toad's movements.

The game is won when you explode every creature on the screen (or when your foe's screen is totally full). Of course, the two-player mode is most exciting, and your multiple-explosion successes lead to a gradual closing down of your opponent's screen in best *Battle Gaiden* fashion.

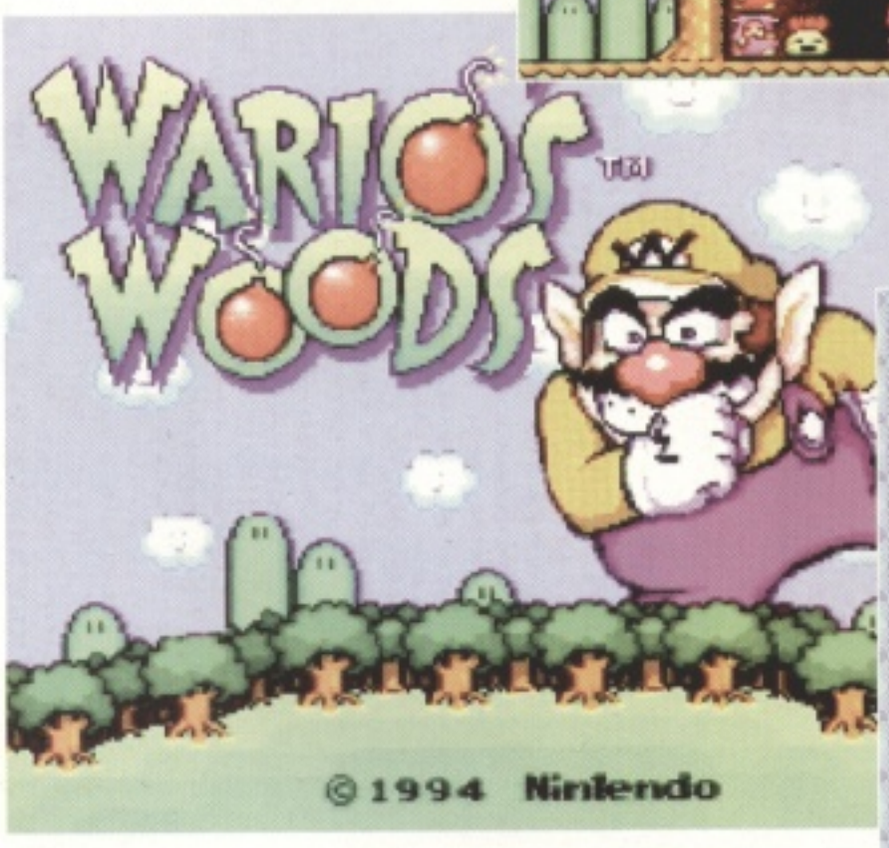
We're looking forward to reviewing *Wario's Woods* very soon, when we'll be seeing exactly what the little Toadster's made of.

Wario's out to protect his woods, but we're not going to let that stop us, are we readers, heh heh (oh, good grief – Ed.)
EASY
NORMAL
HARD

Oooh er... there are three levels of spooky nasties to beat in *Wario's Woods*. Wil and James found themselves struggling on easy!



Up against the clock in the Time Trial. If you don't clear the screen in time, Wario appears to give you real hassle.



Come on Nintendo, what we really want is a new Mario game on the SNES. Not all this character placement stuff.

If you find you're having trouble getting to grips with *Wario's Woods*, there are some handy lessons to teach you techniques.

Snippets

Just space to list a few more highlights, announced at CES, to watch for in the coming year.

Following the success of *Donkey Kong Country*, it seems that the Silicon Graphics workstation is the development tool of choice for the discerning SNES game designer. A new speed high in the pipeline from Williams, bearing the horrific name of *Kyle Petty No Fear Racing*, comprises 24 megabits of 3D pre-rendered graphics and animations that aim to add realism to its gritty petrol-stained nature. US celebrity Kyle Petty drew on his experience of NASCAR racing to design the 28 racetracks. The intensive soundtrack features a running commentary, sampled engine effects and (uh-oh) 13 rock songs.

Our favourite science fiction hardware, the mobile suit, forms the basis of a forthcoming currently under development by Konami which has been provisionally titled *Metal Warriors*. A one- or two-player side-scrolling beat/shoot-'em-up, you control a battledroid pilot whose aim is purely to destroy the opponent. During the game you have the option to abandon your suit for an undamaged or superior model.

Lastly, be on the lookout for *NBA Jam Tournament Edition* from Acclaim in the immediate future. 100 NBA stars, secret characters and 'Hot Spot' power-ups add to the multi-player fun of the original.

MERCHANDISE OF THE MONTH

Those of you who have followed the Nintendo scene for some time will know that a colour Game Boy has long been expected. And here it is, but – doh! This isn't quite what we were looking for.

These portable plastic funbundles were unveiled at the Las Vegas CES, although they've been on sale in Japan for some time now. It seems the general thinking behind the redesign is to make the Game Boy a lifestyle accessory, a fashion statement, though we remain unconvinced.

Besides the choice of colours, which includes a striking green, you can treat yourself to a Swatch-style transparent little number that reveals the workings of the Game Boy through smooth perspex. Unlike a Swatch, however, the Game Boy is unswervingly solid state. So, er, there's not much to look at.

Rumours that Nintendo is to release a Jean Paul Gaultier Game Boy featuring conically-nippled buttons and a tartan casing have been denied.

How do you like yours? The 'oh-so designer-ish' Game Boy Bros. resplendent in their new livery.

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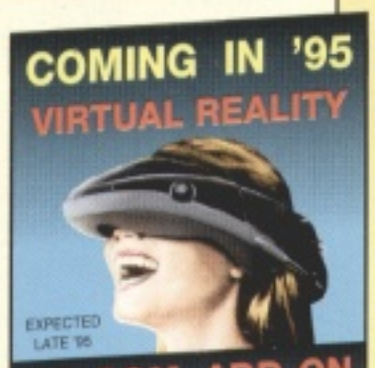

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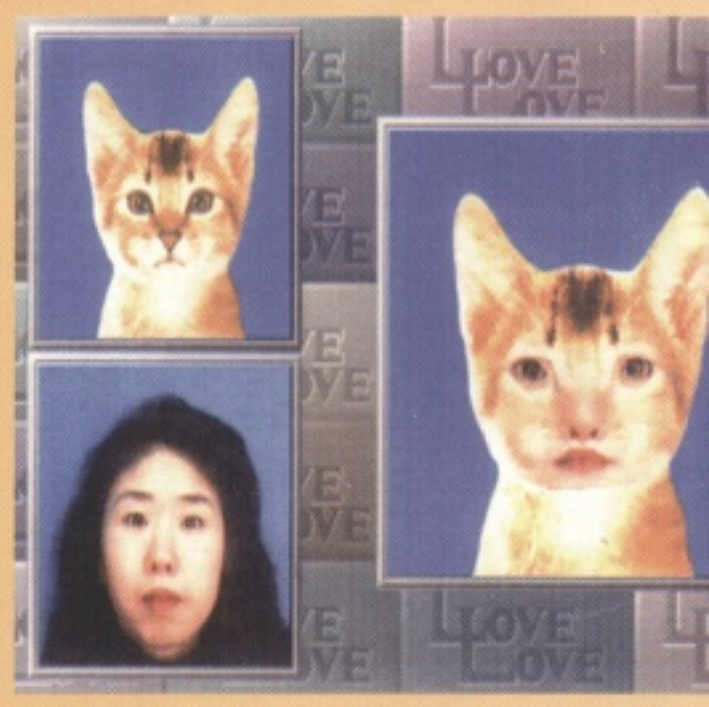
LIVE FROM HELL CITY

By Nic di Costanzo

Last year in Japan the impressive *Ridge Racer* was declared coin-op of the year (Game Machine Best Videos 1994), followed very closely by *Virtua Fighter* and *Lethal Enforcers*. Titles like these occupy the fat end of the financial wedge, where development can cost millions of yen and return billions. But there's another side to Japanese arcades, wherein a great many weird and obscure games are devoted to attracting a rather different public.

Whilst western arcades cater typically for teenage males, Tokyo's game centres make great efforts to target the 'Kokosei' girl. Kokosei girls are Japanese high-school students, distinguished by the distinctive 'Sailor Moon' uniforms which are obligatory in Japan until the age of 18. Their consumer spending power is not to be underestimated and many efforts are made to lure them into the arcades. Competitions, attractions, even live radio broadcasts are used to draw them in. But what about the games machines?



Above: Love Love Simulation creates the monstrous She-Woman Cat-Type Thing.

Thanks to a camera concealed in his raincoat, our correspondent has captured this group of Japanese girls taunting their schoolmates in the Mad Taxi ride (see right). They don't look too frightened.

NO-WIN SITUATION

A section of every Japanese arcade game centre is dedicated to the salaryman – the adults who want to gamble. The focus of this activity is *Pachinko*, a Japanese version of the pin-and-ball game *Bagatelle* which many players find extremely addictive. But it's against the law to win cash in Japan, and even *Pachinko* games only reward you with tokens. *Pachinko* halls will exchange these tokens for small gifts and presents – cuddly toys and the like – when you decide to call it a day, and you get better gifts in exchange for more tokens. However, there's a darker side to the innocent pastime.

Pachinko also happens to be of great interest to the Yakuza – Japan's answer to the Mafia – and some Yakuza gangsters are gracious enough to buy back your presents in small shops that operate nearby the *Pachinko* hall, thus turning your winnings back into cash. Now it might strike you as odd that an organisation of tough gangsters would be desperate enough for your teddy bears and portable radios that they'd set up a stall, and you'd be right. So bear in mind that, usually, these Yakuza are also the owners of the *Pachinko* hall where the presents were won. This crafty sidestepping of the law greatly increases the number of punters who can be found pouring their hard-earned yen into the Pachinko machines every day.

Gambling can be fun in itself, however. Poker, one-armed bandits, boat-race games, and amusements called cyber-deal games which work on statistical probability are very popular in the arcades, even though you only win tokens. There's even a Derby game which prints out the stats for the entire day's 'races' to help the participants get an idea of the running form. In this respect it's as good as real life – maybe even better than the real thing?

It's a terrible affair when any World Cup match comes down to penalties, but Jaleco has capitalised on recent events with this kickable simulator. Now you can put yourself in the place of Baggio (1994), or even Waddle (1990)...

The Love Love Simulator resembles a passport photobooth: it also induces that nervous behaviour whereby customers stand around anxiously waiting to grab the polaroid before anyone else sees it. I'm the Denis Norden of captions, me.

LOVE LOVE SIMULATION

Developed in co-operation with Panasonic, this slightly unusual attraction isn't a game as such, but rather is a fairly sophisticated morphing simulator.

The love option entails a starry-eyed couple sitting in the cabinet and having their photographs taken. The computer then uses its morphing software to manipulate and superimpose the two images, ending up with a display of the face which might, supposedly, belong to the child the couple will have. You can select whether you want the computer to output a boy or girl, of course,and if you're happy with the potential sprog the machine produces a Polaroid-style print. The Love Love Simulation only costs ¥500, and it may prevent some couples making a big mistake...

There's a bit of cheating on the technical side as the machine doesn't use Silicon Graphics-level morphing, but actually has hundreds of images (noses, eyes, mouths and so on) stored in it, thus simplifying the process for itself.

But before you slap the magazine down in disgust, the Love Love Simulation also has two other options. The first is a morphing feature in which you can mix your face with that of an animal such as monkey, cat or dog. The other option is to appear in front of an exotic background like the Pyramids, a jungle, the Taj Mahal and so on. Kokosei girls are mostly drawn to the love option, though, and many unwitting boyfriends are dragged into the Simulation's cabinet.

MAD TAXI

Mad taxi is another collaboration this time between Banpresto and Human. Another game aimed at the Kokosei schoolgirls, this cabinet trades on everyone's fascination with horror. It's got nothing to do with Robert de Niro or Martin Scorsese, though. Instead, you sit in the distinctly spooky taxi and pull down the hood, thus cutting yourself off from escape. Headphones relay the taxi-driver's hideously scary stories and threats.

The idea is that you place your hands on silver skulls that are situated on each side of the seat. The taxi-driver then tells you a grim tale about how you are in fact a criminal, condemned to death. He describes the three methods by which you could be killed; electric chair, hanging from a scaffold or – the French favourite – Madame Guillotine. At the peak of the story, the computer behind Mad Taxi uses sensors in the skulls to measure the amount of sweat (and thus the amount of fear) you are experiencing. This is a variation on the same

system used in polygraph lie-detectors.

At the end of the experience, you receive a printout evaluating your bravery and resistance to fear. Despite the fairly high price of ¥400, and the fact that humid days might discredit any possible results, the chair is always full...

SPORT FOR ALL

While the schoolgirls are busy finding out what their babies will look like and being terrified in taxis, the boys are on the other side of the arcade playing sport games.

Jaleco has developed a World Cup Penalty Simulator. The player sidles up and faces a screen on which there's a goal and a keeper. A ball is at his feet, connected to the floor (a little like an upside down punch-bag). The punter then hoofs the ball, and the computer works out the trajectory.

The standard punch-bag games are still popular in the arcades, though. Taito's *Real Puncher* (which we mentioned a few months ago) is an example which uses a camera to take a photograph of the player, and once you've chosen a costume to appear in on-screen, you see your face getting increasingly damaged according to the amount of punishment you're giving the punch-bag. It uses sophisticated warping techniques.

Most customers use their friends when the photos are taken, so they appear to be punching them in, rather then themselves. In fact a furore blew up recently when a couple of kids, after playing *Real Puncher*, tried it in the street outside...

Above: No takers for '4,000 Coins', then? Below: Ah, I see. They're having a flutter on the gee-gees. A false start rendered this race null and void.

WARPING AND MORPHING

Real Puncher and Love Love Simulation are prime examples of the manner in which cutting-edge technology is rapidly exploited for its entertainment value, no matter how trivial the application. Morphing techniques involve a computer making a 'map' of two pictures. The hardware looks for similar features in both (eyes, noses, mouths) and then seamlessly mixes the two, stretching and recolouring to blend the change.

During warping techniques, the computer makes a map from only one picture. The computer moves pixels to alter elements in this picture. Examples include bigger eyes, different hair and even animal features.

As you can just make out, Taito's *Real Puncher* is actually a *Sonic Blastman* game.

Another thumpety-thump soft hammer games – but this is a *Street Fighter* license! For one or two players, the idea is to hit all the SD Vega (Bison) bosses when they jump up to make your fighter attack on screen.

CHARTS

Tell me, Ted is there a Mrs Ted? Or are you, um, single at the mo?

For weekly UK SNES chart updates be brave and tune in to Digitiser, Channel 4 Teletext: page 470. It's as useful as an adjustable spanner.

OFFICIAL GALLUP UK CHART

▲ UP ▼ DOWN ● NON-MOVER ☆ NEW ENTRY

1	☆	DONKEY KONG COUNTRY • Nintendo
2	▲	MORTAL KOMBAT • Acclaim
3	▼	STREET RACER • Ubisoft
4	▲	LION KING • Virgin
5	☆	MICRO MACHINES • Ocean
6	☆	EARTHWORM JIM • Virgin
7	☆	STARWING • NIntendo
8	☆	SUPER BOMBERMAN 2 • Virgin
9	▼	FIFA SOCCER • Ocean
10	●	SUPER MARIO KART • Nintendo

UK IMPORT
Compiled by Paul Webber

1. Donkey Kong Country — Nintendo
2. Final Fantasy III — Square Soft
3. X-Men Apocalypse — Capcom
4. Demon's Crest — Enix
5. Lion King — Virgin
6. Super Punch Out!! — Nintendo
7. Samurai Spirits — Takara
8. Illusion Of Gaia — Enix
9. Indiana Jones LC — JVC
10. WWF Raw — Acclaim

AMERICA
Compiled by Chuck Winkle

1. Donkey Kong Country — Nintendo
2. Madden NFL '95 — EA Sports
3. NHL '95 — EA Sports
4. Super Return Of The Jedi — JVC
5. Super Punch Out!! — Nintendo
6. Final Fantasy III — Nintendo
7. NBA Live '95 — EA Sports
8. Mortal Kombat III — Acclaim
9. The Lion King — Virgin
10. Beavis And Butt-Head — Viacom

JAPAN
Compiled by Wil Overton

1. Super Peace Boy Legend III — Hudson Soft
2. Romance Of The 3 Kingdoms 4 — Koei
3. Super Donkey Kong — Nintendo
4. Legend Of Kamatachi — Chun Soft
5. Wonder Project J — Enix
6. Breath Of Fire — Capcom
7. Ultimate Parodius — Konami
8. Dokapou — Asmik
9. Perfect Eleven — Konami
10. Kirby Ball — Nintendo

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X-MEN™ FEATURE

The *X-Men* X-plosion is here, and it's only taken 30 years to happen. After decades of being comicdom's best-kept secret, the Marvel mutant superheroes are about to become multi-media stars in a big way, bursting onto TV, films and cinema screens like they've finally found a decent agent. So, with two X-games squaring up for review this month, we take a brief look at the past, present and alternative futures of the *X-Men*...

THE X-FILES

The X-Men – just a bunch of do-gooders in coloured tights or the world's first superhero soap stars? _Super Play_ takes a trip back along Mutation Street...

A classic cover. And, indeed, a classic magazine.

So, just who are these *X-Men*? Ah, well at any given time, it's difficult to say. Y'see, *The X-Men* comic has been running almost as long as *Coronation Street*, and have had about as many members as the casts of *Home and Away* and *Neighbours* put together (that's including both versions of Lucy).

Things are complicated even further by the fact that there have been loads of off-shoot comics, like *X-Factor*, *X-Force*, *The New Mutants* and *Alpha Flight*, and characters in each swap around and intermingle so much it's hardly surprising there are so many mutants around.

In fact, *The X-Men* are probably Marvel Comics' most popular characters ever. Yet while comic fans recognise certain periods of *The X-Men's* history as some of the finest superhero stories ever written, outside comicdom, their names are hardly as household as *Spiderman*, *The Thing* or *Batman* here in the UK.

Though that could all change thanks to a slew of new video games, an animated TV series and an upcoming live action film directed by Richard (*Lethal Weapon*) Donner.

The first issue of *The Uncanny X-Men* was published by Marvel Comics in late 1963. It was written by Stan Lee and drawn by Jack Kirby, the same team who had caused a stir with *The Fantastic Four* two years earlier. Why a stir? Well, Lee and Kirby actually dared to give their characters some personality – for the first time superheroes argued, laughed and had relationships with each other.

Wherever help is needed, *The X-Men* will be there, in a bit.

This trend continued with the *X-Men*. The original line-up consisted of Cyclops, The Beast, Marvel Girl, Angel and Iceman (all of whom are still going in one form or another today). They were all teenagers who had been born with their powers. But the world was not ready for mutants and so they were feared and hated by society.

Luckily this bald geezer in a wheelchair, Professor Xavier (also a telepathic mutant), decided to set a School For The Gifted, a euphemism for a mutant training school. He gathered together the original team and helped them to hone and live with their 'special talents'.

Soon they were fighting mutant baddies who didn't fancy the idea of school (special or otherwise), like Magneto, Mesmero and Juggernaut. They also had to face the giant, robotic, mutant-killing Sentinels on a number of occasions.

Things went along like this without much change until the late '70s. The original *X-Men* had never been Marvel's most popular comic (and had even been cancelled for a while) but then in came a writer called Chris Claremont, who revolutionised the title and turned it into the phenomenon it is today.

He threw out most of the old members (presumably, they graduated), leaving only Cyclops, and created a new generation of multi-ethnic X-Men. Nightcrawler was German, Storm was African, Banshee was Irish, Colossus was Russian, Thunderbird was Red Indian, Wolverine was Canadian and Sunfire was Japanese.

But these new super-humans were even more

It's over 30 years since they appeared, and they still look good today.

X-GAMES

The X-Men have never had a really good deal when it comes to video games. _Spiderman_ and the _X-Men_ was their first SNES outing and a pretty lame platformer it turned out to be. _Wolverine_ and _X-Men Apocalypse_ (reviewed on the following pages) are both pretty lame beat-'em-ups.

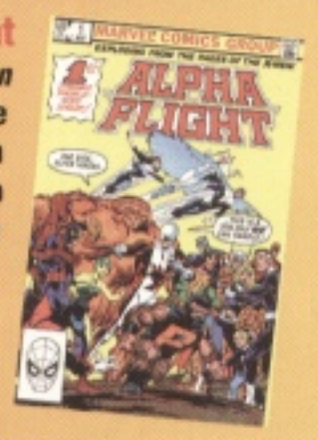
In the arcades there have been a couple of equally unattractive beat-'em-ups, though _X-Men Children of the Atom_ – a new one-on-one beat-'em-up from Capcom – is very similar to their own recent _Darkstalker_ looks like it could be an improvement on the current games.

X-MEN FEATURE

X-RELATIVES

A quick guide to spin-off *X-Men* comic books:

Alpha Flight



Canadian *X-Men* artist John Byrne left the *X-Men* in the early '80s to create a Canadian group of mutant. Apparently the Canadians are more tolerant of mutants, since the Government trained up this lot. Members included The Shamen (but no Eberneezer Goode, strangely), Northstar and Sasquatch.

New Mutants

Kiddie mutants... aarrgghh! A really horrible title that started in the mid '80s and didn't last very long.

X-Factor

When the original *X-Men* they went their separate ways for a while, then after a few years re-formed as *X-Factor* (in the mid '80s). Then all the original X-Factor left and new characters like Avalanche and ex-new mutants like Wolfsbane. Cyclops' brother, Havok, also showed up.

Excalibur

This lot, formed in the late '80s, were the 'British' mutants, though the main man Captain Britain wasn't strictly a mutant, and Nightcrawler wasn't British but German. Renowned as the 'witty' title. 'Oh, you British... you're so funnneeee...'

X-Force

Er, another new lot, starring some mutants called Domino and Cable...

Generation X

The latest addition, which started just last year, and sees a whole new load of young mutants start a fresh term at the School For Gifted Youngsters. Characters include Skin, Synch, Jubilee and a re-activated Banshee.

'human' than their predecessors, and *The X-Men* suddenly became a true superhero soap, in which the personal traumas of the characters were just as important as the machinations of the supervillains.

They were also more vulnerable. Within a few issues Thunderbird was dead and Sunfire had gone off in a huff. Banshee lost his sonic powers soon afterwards. Marvel Girl came back, was transformed into a mega-being called Phoenix and then was killed by aliens who deemed her too powerful.

But nobody stays dead long in the X-world. Phoenix rose from the ashes more times than the Australians have won them while Professor X has copped it no less than twice.

And anyway, there were always mutants to replace lost members – Shadowcat, Rogue, Gambit, Psylocke and Jubilee to name a few.

Comic fans loved these new 'human' superheroes. But it was when the now-legendary artist (and co-plotter) John Byrne took over the artwork on *The X-Men* that the legend really began. The Claremont/Byrne combination created some of the finest comics of the '80s. And then all the other X-titles started to appear.

And that's why it's hard to say at any one time who the X-Men are. Members leave, return, mutate, die, resurrect, marry, have kids, become gods, get divorced and star in three titles at once. So whenever you watch an *X-Men* cartoon, or play an *X-Men* game you never really know what vintage *X-Men* are on display. Or even if that particular combination of X-Men ever really existed.

It'll be interesting to see which X-Men appear in the upcoming live-action film.

There's one slight problem. There are rumours that Marvel are going to rewrite history by sending a Professor X's son, Legion, back in time to kill his father before he had a chance to form the X-Men. This would allow Marvel to completely rewrite X-history from Day One. Hang on, my head hurts.

The *X-Men*, going strong and being great after all this time. And having games written about them too.

Power, strength,. courage and wisdom. Admirable properties.

FANTASY X-MEN LEAGUE

Cyclops (aka Scott Summers) has powerful optic laser beams that blast from his eye. The only thing that can control them is ruby quartz, so he has to wear a visor to stop him giving people the evil eye whenever he looks at them. He's had an on-off relationship for Jean Grey (Marvel Girl/Phoenix) for the last 30 years. I think she's trying to tell him something.

Wolverine is probably the most popular *X-Man* ever. A grumpy Canadian with self-healing powers, super keen senses, adamantine claws and shocking sideburns, he has starred in his own series of comic book, married a Japanese babe and then he watched her die.

Beast was an original *X-Man*. At first he looked pretty normal apart from his prehensile feet. He was the super-athletic and amazingly strong. Then he started growing blue fur for no apparent reason. A member of *The Avengers* and *The Defenders* for a while, he keeps coming back into the X-fold.

Gambit is one of the newer X-Men (first appearing in the mid '80s). Looking nothing like Gareth Hunt, this Cajun mutant has kinetic power which let him charge up objects until they explode.

Psylocke is another relatively new character. She's a martial arts expert with a psychic powers and a brain-frying psychic knife.

Storm is much more our idea of an X-lady. She's one cool lady who can control the weather, and briefly had a punk hairstyle.

Rogue only has one power, but one that makes this Southern Belle probably the most powerful X-Person ever – she can absorb other mutants' powers just by touching them.

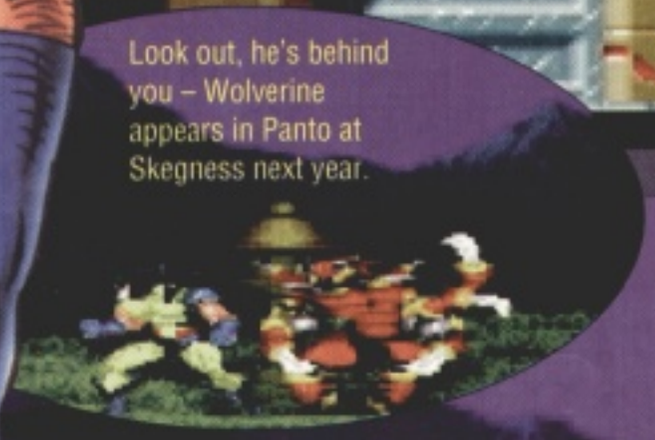
WOLVERINE

ADAMANTIUM RAGE

The X-Man with built-in Swiss army knives is on his own this time round. Is less more, is this more or less the same as every other X-game?

UK Release

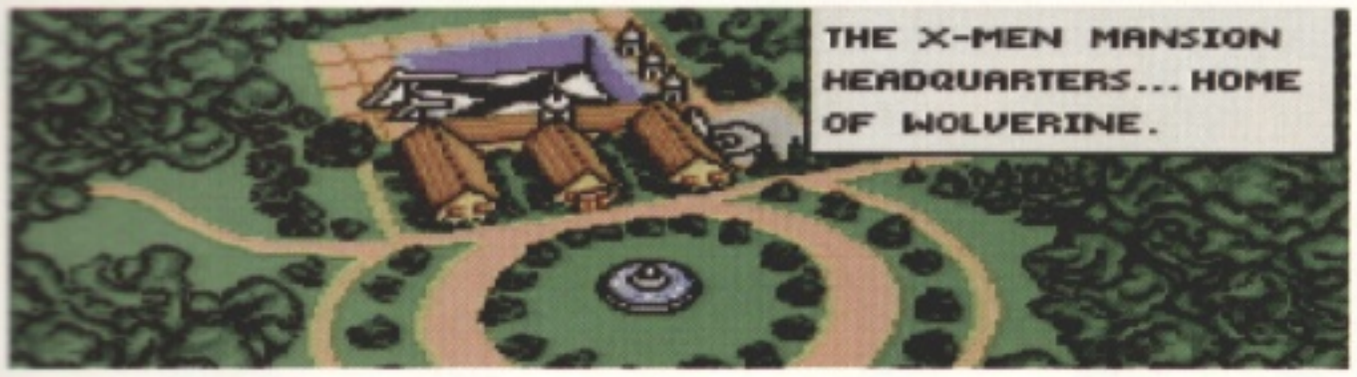
Game: Wolverine – Adamantium Rage
Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Bits Corporation
Price: £50 approx
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 16 Mbit



HOP, SKIP 'N' JUMP

Why stroll down a corridor when you can do an 18-cert, blood and guts rendition of *Singin' In The Rain*?

X-MEN FEATURE



I think it's fair to say that the intro sequence, done in the style of a comic, hardly lives up to the brilliantly-drawn comic-books.

MIA GROOVY LITTLE MOVER

The one thing that impresses about *Wolverine* is Wolverine himself. He must rate as one of the most multi-talented sprites ever to grace the SNES and has a wider variety of moves than your average game of chess. It's a shame that the collision detection often renders the brilliant control you have over the character completely useless.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

How come all mutants in the *X-Men* have really useful mutations? You never get people with excessively large earlobes, musical intestines or a liking for Lite-flavoured Pringles. They all have wings, laser eyes or, like Wolverine, self-repairing bodies.

But that's not all Wolverine's got. He also possesses an adamantium skeleton and retractable adamantium claws (which he was surgically granted by the Canadian Government). And so empowered, he slashes his way through life... and walls... and people... all in the name of truth, justice and gratuitous violence. It pays the bills.

And slash his way through this scrolling beat-'em-up is what he does. In style. He's got an admirable display of slashes, has Wolverine. A slash for every occasion. Press a button, watch him slash. Press two buttons, and watch him slash even more exotically. This guy knows how to slash. And the superbly-animated sprite makes each and every slash a pure joy.

This recuperative power, though – that makes for dull gameplay. Especially in a scrolling beat-'em-up that hasn't got a time limit. Because if, say, you want to destroy a robot enemy, but your energy's getting low, you just get Wolverine to retreat to a safe corner, go away and make a cup of tea, then when you come back, he's all slashed up again and ready to relieve his pent-up fury.

The problem is, you'll have probably thought of something better to do in the meantime. Like have a sl... slightly better time in the bathroom.

Wolverine, you see, just isn't very exciting. It predictably plods through a load of beat-'em-up clichés. The level designs owe to the British Rail Sandwich making school of inspiration with the occasional bog-standard puzzle elements inserted in a vague attempt to get out it of the rut.

Bad collision detection doesn't help. Wolverine has to be a precise distance from an enemy to slash 'im one.

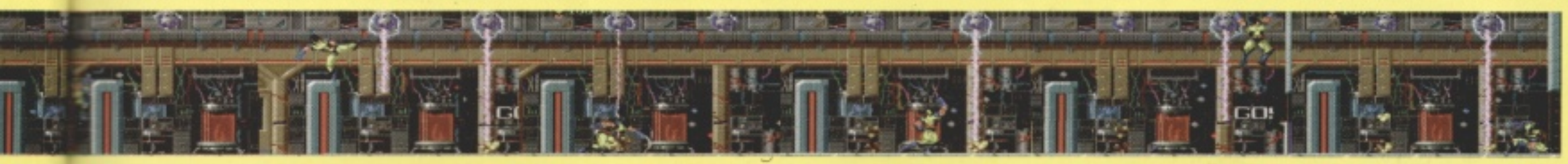
To tell the truth, the game does improve, and a the last couple of levels have their moments (mostly provided by some impressive graphics, it has to be admitted). But the first two levels are very poor and hardly urge you on to greater glories.

Of the two *X-Men* games reviewed this month, *Wolverine* is the winner. Just. Mainly because the levels are bigger, there's more to do, and Wolverine himself comes out of the deal looking better in this version. But the *X-Men* still deserve a much better game.

● Dave Golder

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
73%	66%	59%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	60%
55%		

VERDICT: Apart from the brilliantly animated main sprite there's nothing that distinguishes the game at all. It never gets it claws in.



X-MEN APOCALYPSE

Japanese Release

Game: X-Men Apocalypse
Publisher: Capcom
Developer: In-house
Price: £50 approx
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 16Mbit
Adaptor: NTSC

It's mutant versus mutant without the aid of lawyers, as the X-Men (still stuck in the politically incorrect '70s) face the evil that is Apocalypse...

Cyclops makes his bid for an Oscar wi this heart-rending death scene.

Wolverine – useful for getting stones out of horses' hooves.

The hanch shy away in horror from Psylocke's fearsome purple rinse hair-style.

Final Fight meets *The X-Men* is the best way to describe *Apocalypse*.

MIGHTY MUTANT POWERS

Cyclops
Eye, eye, what's going on 'ere then?

Beast
The furry funster flies into a fireball.

Wolverine
A pretty mean left-hook. The right meat skewer is pretty nasty too.

Psylocke
Don't seal a contract with a handshake with this lady.

Gambit
Gareth Hunt eat your heart out. This dude's telekinetic.

X-MEN™ FEATURE

IN A RECENT EPISODE

Gambit mulls over which guardian looks the easiest to take on.

One of the X-Men's arch enemies, Apocalypse, has taken over an island where he is locking up mutants and creating Sentinels (huge, mutant-killing robots). Professor X sends five of the X-Men to free the mutants and destroy Apocalypse's base. He reckons the best tactics are for them to split. But we reckon it's just a plot device. It's a shame that you can't choose which X-Man to take on which mission, though.

Sentinels are mutant hunters.

Apocalypse, head baddie.

Trouble in the shore near Sellafield again.

Lift out of order? No problem. Just use new Ronco retractable metal claws.

Gambit listens out for approaching trains and Indian horses.

TAKE NOTES, MISS PSYLOCKE

Each of the missions starts off with a short animated sequence showing off the powers of the mutant superheroes. It's strange, though, how all the male mutants start their missions by knocking out a few baddies while Psylocke, the 'token girlie' in the team, gets blasted out of the sky by sentinels.

Psylocke fails to make a blow for women's lib.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

'It's bizarre, Agent Scully, very bizarre – but it's a phenomenon that's becoming more and more common these days,.'

'But, Mulder, it's just some old horizontally-scrolling beat-'em-up.'

'Ah, but it's not.'

'Not what? Mulder, stop talking in riddles.'

'It's not "an old beat-'em-up'. It's new.' '

'Don't you find it strange, Scully? Really strange? Over the years other types of games have been updated, improved, freeze-dried, cosmetically enhanced and combined so that you you only need to take one into the shower. But look at any horizontally scrolling beat-'em-up and you'd be hard pressed to tell whether it came it from 1990 or 1995. Don't you find that odd, Scully?'

'I suppose so, but it's hardly top secret X-File material, surely?'

'This game – *X-Men Apocalypse*. It doesn't do anything in the least bit original. It's just like dozens of other horizontally-scrolling beat-'em-ups. How can it survive? Why do the authorities ignore the fact? Are the public being duped?'

'Well, it's not totally unoriginal, Mulder. It uses a couple of X-Men not used in previous *X-Men* horizontally scrolling beat-'em-ups. And they each have special power that you activate like special moves in *Street Fighter II*? Cross pollination of genres is surely a good thing.'

'But the changes are purely cosmetic, Scully. Don't you see, that? Pick away at the surface, and see what's left beneath. Or rather, see what isn't.'

'But if it plays okay as a game...?'

'Well, yes, it plays okay. There aren't any bugs. It looks okay. It sounds alright. But isn't it all a bit like something out of *Invasion of The Body Snatchers?* They're replacing real games with characterless imitations.'

'Oh, come on Mulder. Don't get melodramatic. It's just a piece of harmless fun. Not every game can be a work of art. And the mission structure of the game is quite, well, cute, I suppose. Being able to choose which mission you want to tackle in any order you like, well...that's good, isn't it?'

'Is it? I don't think so. All the missions are so short, and essentially the same throughout, so when you get bored with one you can switch to another? So what's there to surprise you? And you can play all the levels with a cheat turned which enables you to carry out the special moves at the press of a button. So what's the challenge? All the levels are incredibly easy as well. Everything seems geared to getting to finish with the game as soon as possible. I find that rather sinister, Scully.'

'Mulder, you find your own shadow sinister.'

'Yes, have you noticed the way it's been following me around...?'

● Dave Golder

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
70%	58%	59%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	52%
47%		

VERDICT: Verdict: Why do all *X-Men* games seem to be humdrum horizontally-scrolling beat-'em-ups. It's about time they mutated into something a bit more original.

PINBALL FANTASIES

Partyland

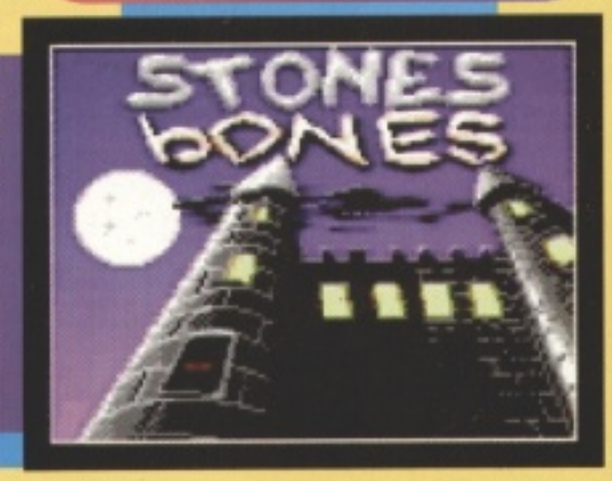
Not the easy table you'd expect, seeing as this is the first one. There isn't a great deal to do, and most of the work is done by the bottom flippers. This makes it a bit easier, but the ball often gets nasty ricochets and flies between your flippers before you can do anything about it. Bah!

Speed Devils

Because it's all about cars and stuff, see? Well this is probably the best table. There's lots to do and the ball can be kept alive by the rankest of amateurs. If you're good, though, you can use your skill to keep the thing alive for ages, getting stupendous amounts of points. It's cool.

Billion Dollar Gameshow

Dominated by a casino wheel thing, this one has got loads of aerial ramps and tracks to go along. It's not a bad table, but gets annoying if you keep hoisting the ball onto the wires and thus have to sit around for it to come down somewhere.



Stones and Bones

A frightening table (not really) which is actually the second best one. There are plenty of bonuses to get and it plays quickly too. Jolly good, but don't expect to be awake all night.

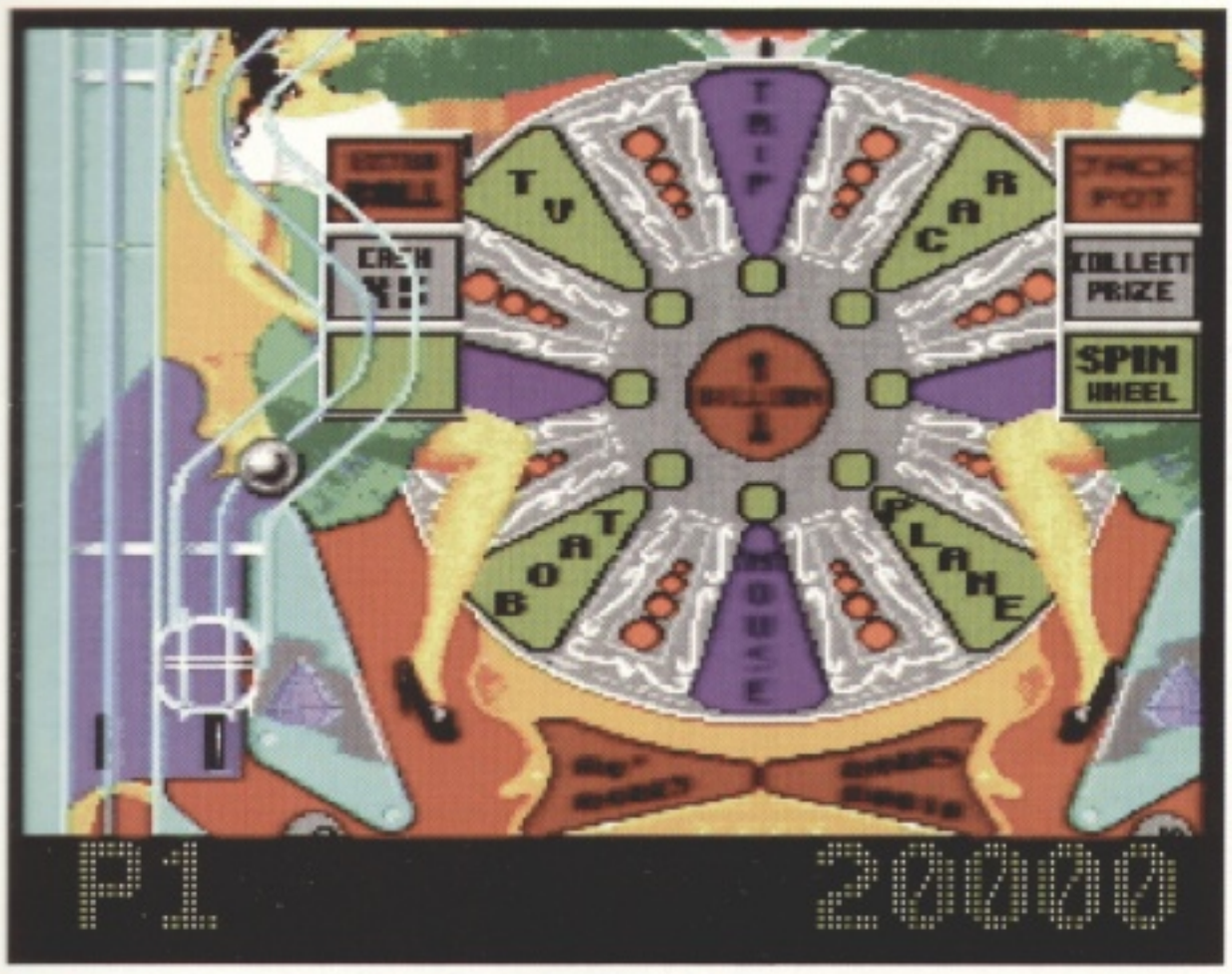
UK Release

Game: Pinball Fantasies
Publisher: Gametek
Developer: Spidersoft
Price: £44.99
Release: Out now
Players: 1 to 8
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

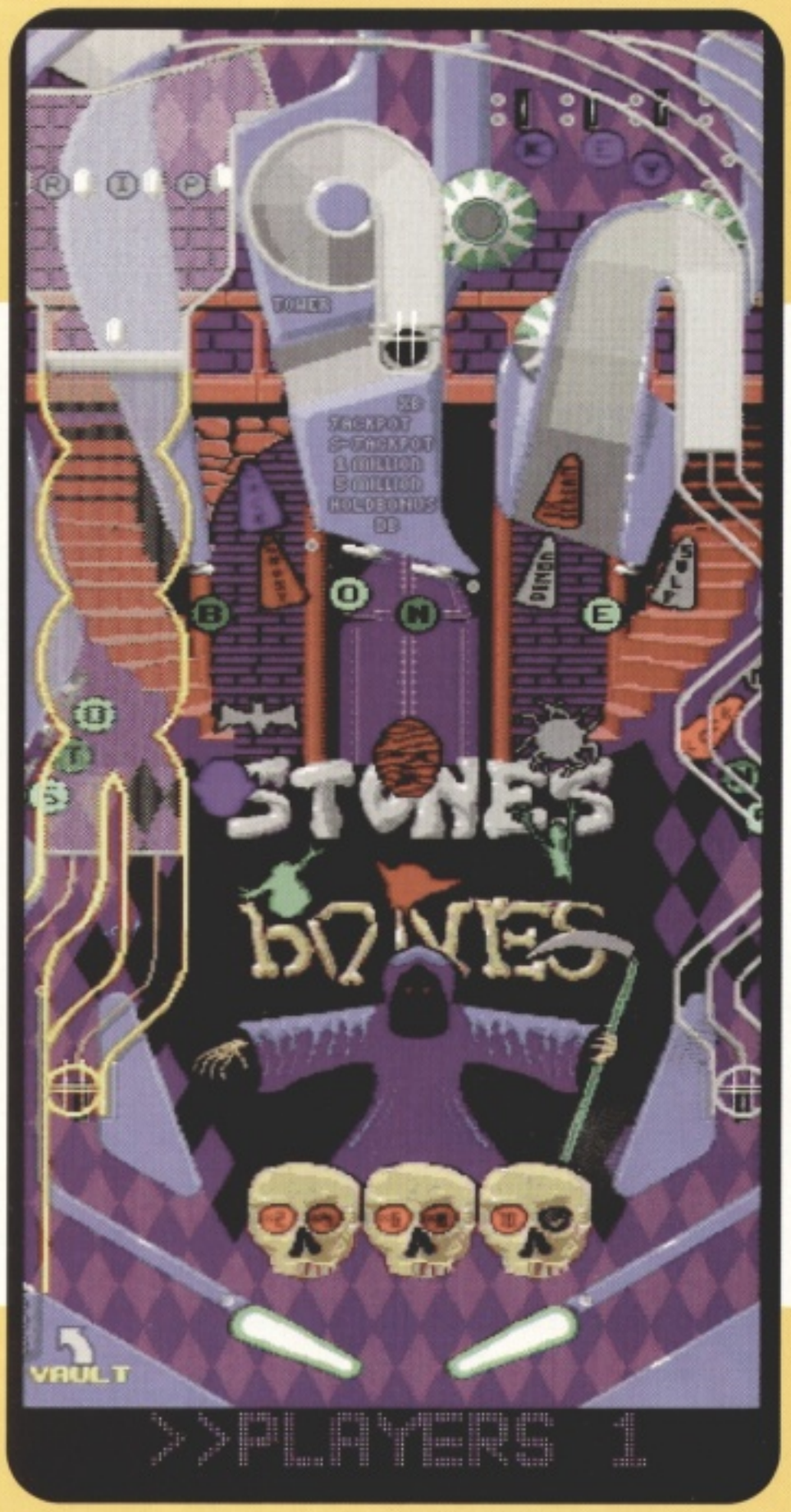
TURN THE TABLES

There are four tables to play in *Pinball Fantasies*. What's that? You'd like more? Well to be honest, so would we. But four is all Spidersoft have provided, so four is what you get. Be grateful. Some people in other countries don't even have SNESses.

And we solemnly promise not to mention anything to do with Pinball Wizard or Elton John or anything in this review...



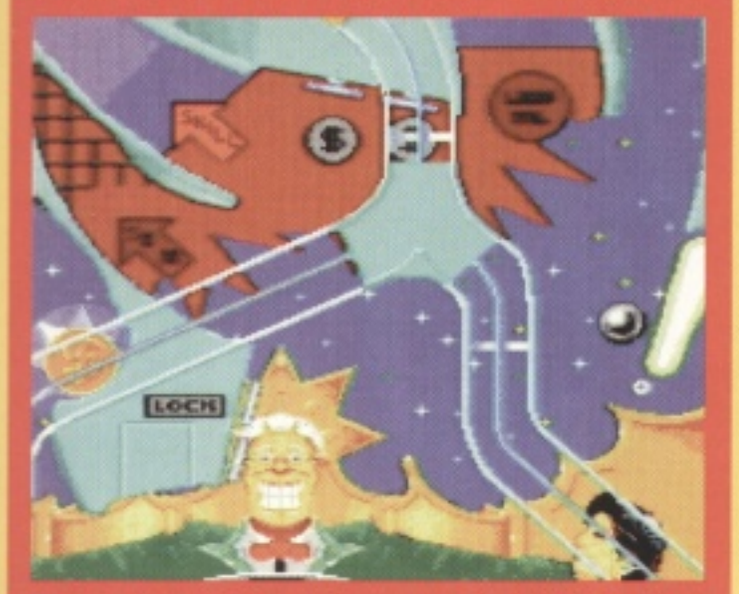
Above: Of course you can't really win a car, boat or plane. You can't even win a TV. It's only a SNES game, see.



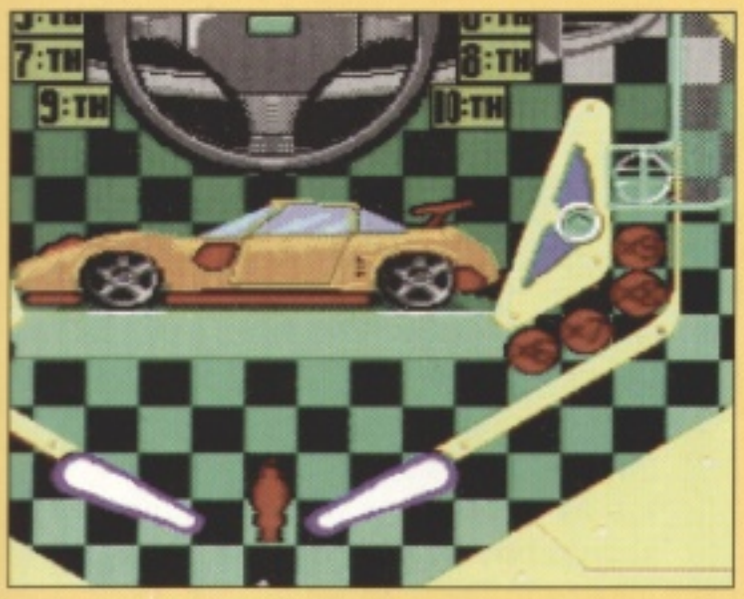
Right: The terrifying Stones and Bones table. Play this for five minutes and you'll be up all night with the light on. Because it's quite scary, you see.

FLIPPIN' HECK

Most screens have two sets of flippers. There's probably a technical term for the upper set, but they're there anyway. Using them is a great skill because the top of the screen is where the big points are amassed. It's also safer to keep the ball there.



Oh, and getting the ball to take the right route on those overhead tracks is a bit tricky as well. Tilt is the answer.



Have you ever seen a car like that one? It looks like someone left it on a radiator. Still, don't mock because this is probably the most playable table and er, sure plays a mean pinball.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Pinball Dreams got 75% in issue 18. This sequel is better. But what did Tony whinge about in the original review? Well, for a start he had a pop about the way that the scrolling slowed down the ball, thus making the game too laid-back and casual.

Well that's been fixed in *Fantasies*. The screen still scrolls (smoothly, it has to be said) but it doesn't spoil the game much. Well, it does a bit because nothing scrolls on a real pinball table (except the text at the top) so it can't be perfect. But, er, as I said, it's better.

Also Tony didn't like the way that the SNES should have presented the player with loads of colours, lights and sounds. There are half-way decent sounds, but the lights and colours aren't really there in *Fantasies*. Considering the hardware the programmers have to play with, this should have been eye-catching. As it is, the game is just rather nice to look at.

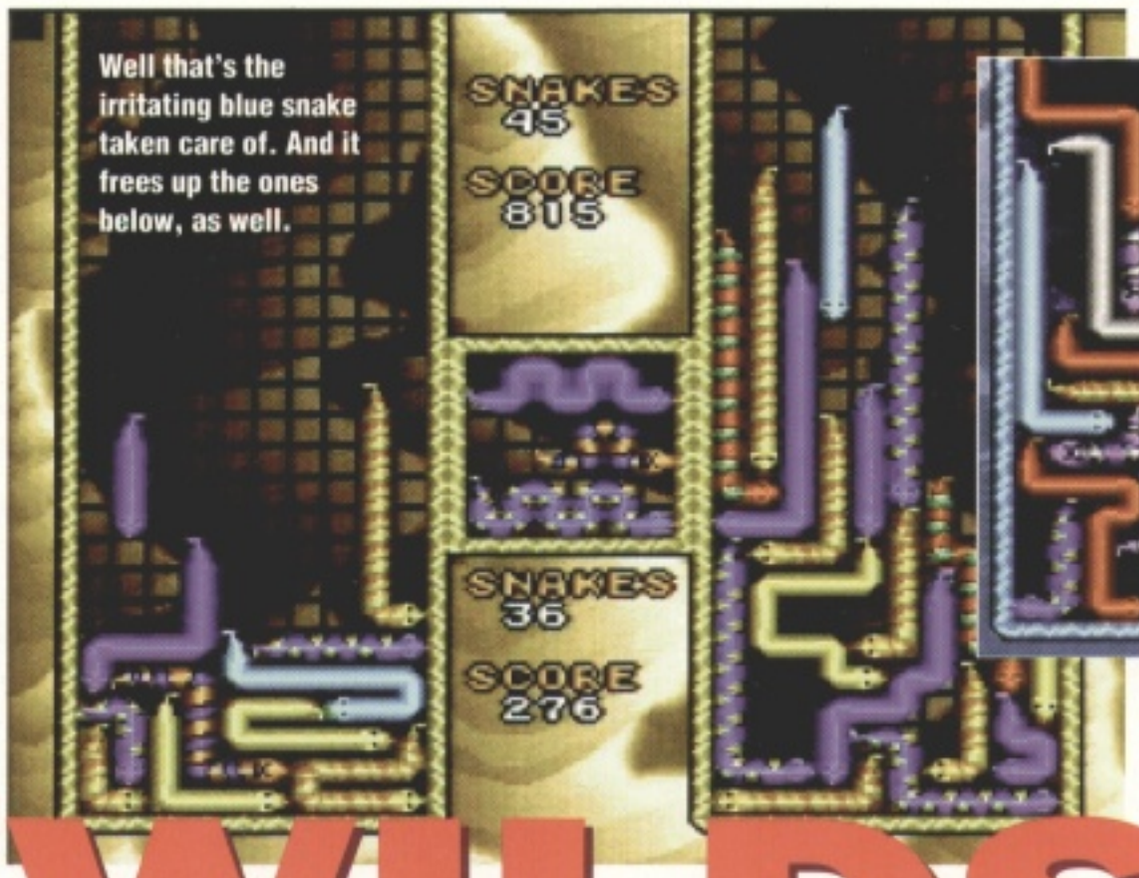
But the ball is nicely programmed and the flippers are all right. Even the tables are fairly well set out (though table one is still too hard, I reckon). The trouble is that there are only four tables. Six would have been the minimum I'd have thought represented value for your dosh, even though the game is competitively priced.

And that's about it, really. It's pinball. It's playable and definitely an improvement on *Pinball Dreams*. As it's only got four tables and you'll play it in short bursts and leave it for a while. Unless there are eight of you, in which case it's more fun as you each take turns.

● James Leach

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
73%	80%	82%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	81%
73%		

VERDICT: A good pinball game, but not half as neat as the one which we're all sure could be written. The SNES deserves the best, and this could have done with four extra meg and that still imaginary game.


Well that's the irritating blue snake taken care of. And it frees up the ones below, as well.
SNAKES 45
SCORE 815
SNAKES 36
SCORE 276

All you need is one decent snake match and this entire can of worms will shuffle down.

ADDER 'NUFF YET?

This snake appears at random and takes out all the snakes stacked up in the pile (as long as they're of the same colour). It's a little bit like the fairy in *Pac-Attack*.

Just thought you'd like to know that.

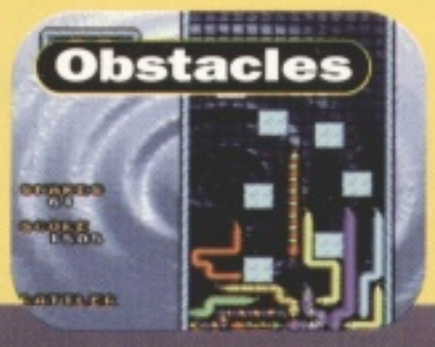
There are no snakes in Ireland. This is a fact. There are, however, spiders and a few bats.

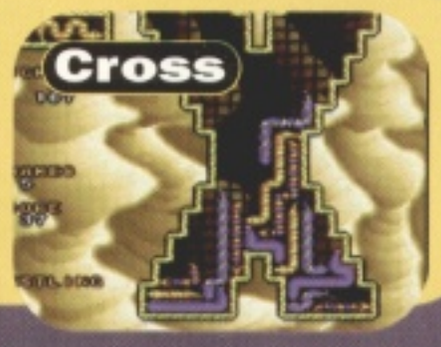
WILDSNAKE

Ophiophobia is the fear of snakes. Cartophobia is the fear of poor American import puzzlers. Are we sufferers? Read on.

American Release

Game: Wildsnake
Publisher: Spectrum Holobyte
Developer: Bullet-Proof Software
Price: Approx £50
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit
Adaptor: NTSC only





VARIATIONS ON THE THEME

There are five sorts of screen for the snakes to slither down. The weirdest-shaped ones are actually easier to deal with than they look. Flask and X, for example, are wider at the bottom, leading to more chances to store and match the snakes.

But after a while, all these little options get a bit tedious and you'll go into the kitchen looking for something to eat rather than play another game.

The cyan snake eats one of his own. Eating big snakes with little ones is a good way of gaining yourself space.

Above: Snakes 'smell' with their tongues.

And ducks 'walk' using a kind of webbed 'feet'.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Was *Tetris* any good? Eh? It was, wasn't it? But was it almost impossible to improve on? Hmm? Yes. Most people will agree that it was. So why do people like Bullet Proof keep trying?

The thing is, this isn't a bad game. Snakes drop from the top and wriggle to the lowest point they can reach, depending on the direction in which they're facing. When a snake of a certain colour and pattern meets another the same, it makes the first one disappear. So the trick is to keep every snake on the screen accessible, so when a similar one drops, you can match them up and help to reduce the mess on screen.

When the matched snakes disappear, the rest of them shuffle down into any available gap. This often leads to more matches and so on. It all works okay, and you can build up matches so that multiple clearings can occur. This, in two-player mode, leads to irritating blocks appearing on your opponents' screen.

But let's go back to the beginning theme here. it's not as good as *Tetris*. Only people with a penchant for collecting Tetris-like puzzle games will be hooked. It's fine, sure, but why would you want it? variety? Well there is that, I suppose.

● James Leach

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
65%	61%	77%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
60%		70%

VERDICT: A puzzle game that works as it was designed to. But it's not as engrossing, rewarding to play or fun as *Tetris*. So only top snake fans should buy it. Like Terry Nutkins, for example.

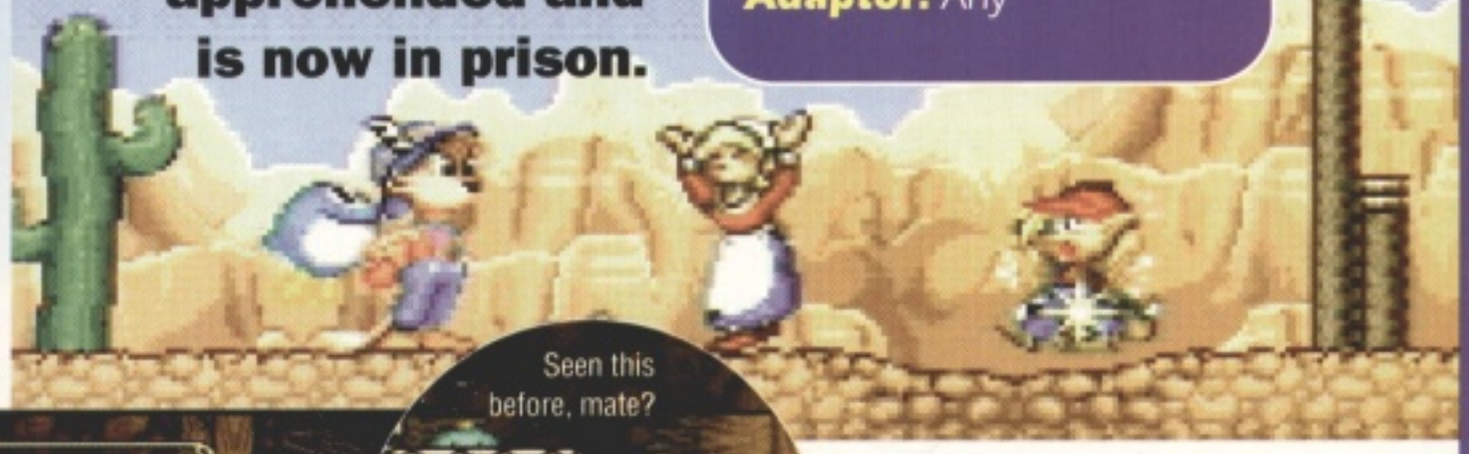
ARDY LIGHTFOOT

Surprised? You will be when that statue breaks and stone balls appear.

His brother, Ardy Lightfinger was going to be in this game as well. But he got apprehended and is now in prison.

UK Release

Game: Ardy Lightfoot
Publisher: Titus Software
Developer: ASCII Corporation
Price: £39.99
Release: End of March
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit
Adaptor: Any



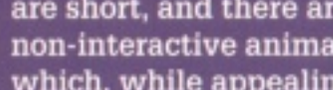
Above: 'A burning village you say? Tch. Happens all the time, lady.'

RIPPLE THOSE PECS

Pec is the name of Ardy's little friend. He's dead useful for hurling at the *Hebereke's Popoon*-style characters which populate the levels. He always returns and only disappears when Ardy gets damaged and starts flashing. If our hero struggles on, he'll find another Pec in a chest a little further along the level. And he's great.

Like an RPG, you can plot the progress of your little team.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?



How old are you? No, it's rude to ask. I'll put it a different way. Which if the following progs is your favourite? – a) *Panorama*, b) *Byker Grove*, c) *Power Rangers*. If you answered c) you're probably the right age group for Ardy Lightfoot. Titus are pitching the game at the younger end of the SNES-buying public. The sort that get their parents to buy the games for them, in fact.

It's a platformer with bright colours, a host of cute characters and some clever, appealing animation. You, as Ardy, must recover the lost fragments of something to restore the land to peace and things. You know the score. And there are some bosses and stuff to beat as well. Aiding you in this quest is a blob cute enough to have been drawn by Wil. He's called Pec and Ardy hurls him at baddies to destroy them. Friends eh? They always come through.

As you rush around the levels, you'll become aware that Ardy is a neat, nifty game. Sure, it's for the fumbling fingers of those younger than us, but it's not *too* easy and it's got some clever ideas. The levels are short, and there are perhaps too many non-interactive animated sequences which, while appealing to little-'uns, are merely pauses in the action to hardened games-players.

Platform games need variety, though, and *Ardy Lightfoot* does well on this score. It's got a lot going for it, and a tougher, more worldly-wise version would do well in any gamer's collection. As Titus admit they're pitching this one at new SNES owners and the younger player, they've got it about right.

● James Leach

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
86%	81%	83%
GAMELIFE 77%	OVERALL SCORE:	83%

VERDICT: **A neat game with great cartoon-style graphics. There isn't quite enough there for the seasoned game player, but as a my-first-platform-game, it's got everything.**

EARTHWORM JIM

You can whip that pink dog thing along, for some reason.

UK Release

Game: Earthworm Jim
Publisher: Virgin
Developer: Shiny Entertainment
Price: £49.99
Release: Out Now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 24Mbit

ANIMAL FARM

Bizarre is the word. Jim meets some of the weirdest friends this side of Whipsnade. They aren't there to be killed, on the whole (although enough baddies are), and in fact they generally aid you in your quest. They're also superbly drawn and generally add much to the mirth of *Earthworm Jim*.

Above: Cow /fridge. Such juxtapositions are common in *EWJ*.

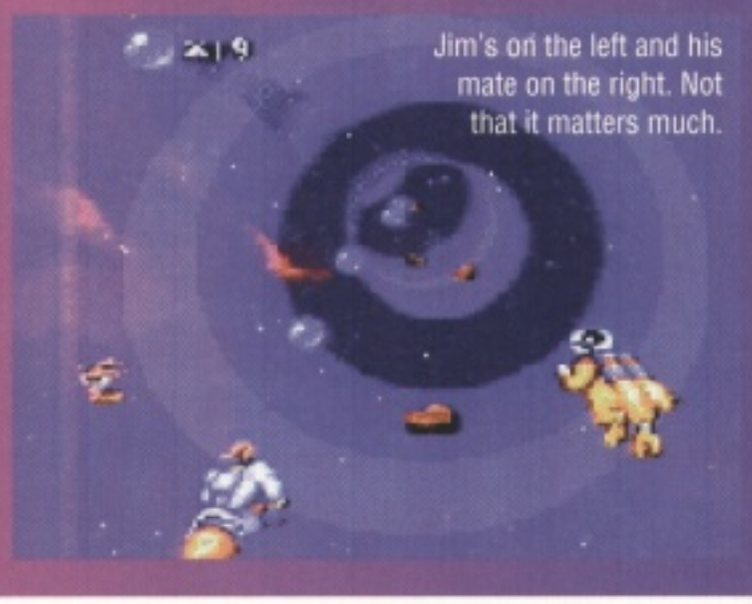
Left: Worm riding hamster. It just gets better, doesn't it?

He hasn't got a leg to stand and he's got no backbone, but he's still such a hero...

OBLIGATORY 3D BIT

It had to be here. As surely as comedy shows in the '70s had dancing in the middle to break up the monotony of humour, *Earthworm Jim* has got a 3D rush-down-the-tunnel section which is there, presumably for the same reason.

It's jolly fine, too, and every time something untoward happens, Jim lets out various utterance which, if we had the dosh, we'd think worthy of bunging on a cover-mounted CD just so you can enjoy them as well. Hurrah. (We don't have the dosh, though. And there aren't quite enough samples anyway. Bit of a non-starter, that idea, actually. Sorry.)



Jim's on the left and his mate on the right. Not that it matters much.

Collect the bubbles and avoid asteroids. Just as you would in real life, really.

Things in *Earthworm Jim* don't just vanish when you shoot them, they explode marvellously.

Nice to see Jim using his head at last. It's just another way of getting around for the lad.

Above: Haven't got a clue what's going on here. Nope. It's impossible to say.

Below: This is actually the snot level. And that's snot Jim's fighting. Urgh etc.

An exquisite moment of agony for the eponymous hero. Stretched and chomped in one go.

This chap's a sort of mini-boss, but in *EWJ* it's so difficult to tell who's who and that.

Jim's dead, baby, Jim's dead. In fact he's been eaten by, a thing.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

There's been a lot of fuss about *Earthworm Jim*. And virtually all of it is entirely deserved. It's a 24 meg platform game with astonishing graphics, amazing sound and wonderful gameplay. well that's that got out of the way.

The game certainly adds new twist to the platform theme. You can go anywhere, do a large number of things or simply sit and watch some gorgeous animation. Of course, there's loads of jumping from crumbly platform to collapsing plate, and back again, but somehow you can overlook that because the game has such magic.

Hold on. Third paragraph already and I haven't said anything bad about *Earthworm Jim*. Well that's because the only annoying points (dead-ends and the occasionally leap demanding pixel-perfection) are swallowed up in the overall enjoyableness of the game. So let's move onto the fourth paragraph without finding anything really wrong with the game.

The humour in the game sits very well. There are few games which can carry off a sense of humour and still maintain playability and integrity, but this is certainly one of them. Of course, the first time you see the beautifully-animated jokes will always be the best. And maybe, just maybe, when you get stuck and you have to see the same gag over and over again as you try to work your way forward, you'll get fed up with *Earthworm Jim*. But I doubt it, to be honest with you.

So if you like a laugh, you like smart animation and excellent (if tough and occasionally quirky) gameplay, this is a platformer I heartily recommend. It's a stylish classic and deserves the adoration it's receiving.

● James Leach

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
95%	88%	87%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
90%		91%

VERDICT: Beautiful, polished and big as only a 24 meg game can be. *Earthworm Jim* is an example of how to write great platformers. Buy it and enjoy it. You can't really fail to.

THE LION KING

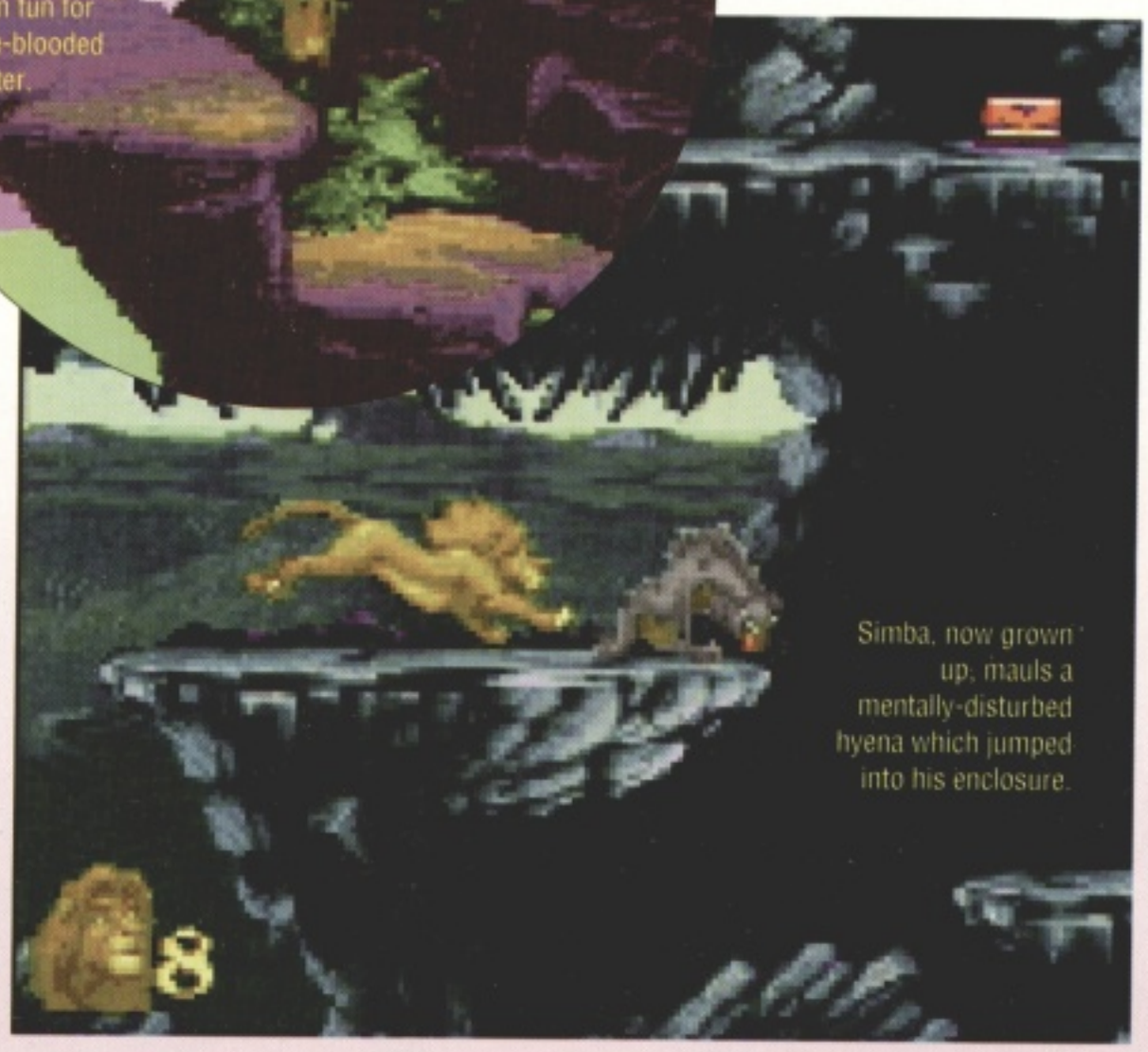
He may be the Lion King, but does he have a failed marriage behind him? Does he paint lochs? Criticise architecture? Talk to plants? Well he might do the last one...

UK Release

Game: Lion King
Publisher: Virgin
Developer: Westwood
Price: £50 approx
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 16 Mbit

Under the blazing African sun the Lion King is hoisted and bounced around until he wets himself.

Platform fun for the blue-blooded youngster.



Simba, now grown up, mauls a mentally-disturbed hyena which jumped into his enclosure.

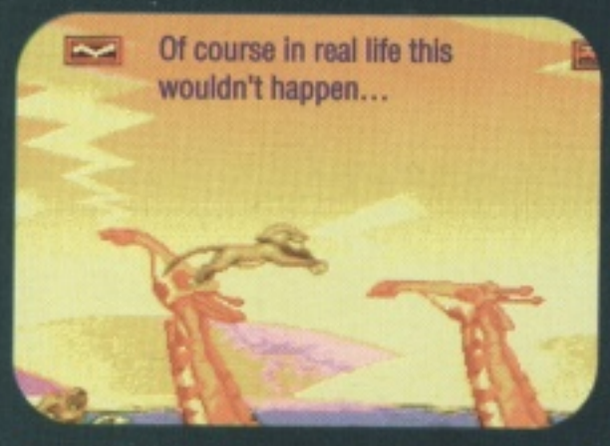
Right: Slippery waterfall level proves too much for royal carnivore.

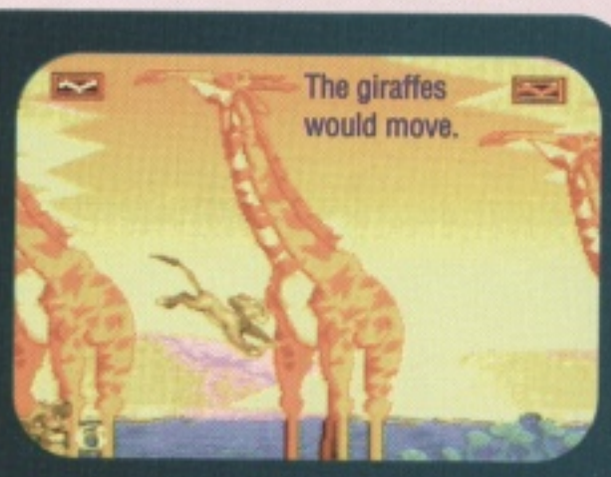
Call the Firemen (from page 46). There's a cat stuck up a tree in deepest Africa!

PRIDE COMES BEFORE A FALL

Yes, you get the once-in-lifetime chance to bounce the young Simba across a load of giraffe heads. Be sure not to linger, though, because they toss their heads after a second or two!

This is the sort of thing which, it has to be said, has been seen in every platform game produced in the last 350 years. Sure, it's well done (if a little easy) and the graphics and smoothness can't be faulted. So if you've just got yourself a Super Nintendo and haven't experienced the delights of platform games, give it a whirl. You'll love it.





YOU CAN'T HIDE YOUR LION EYES

If you can keep Simba alive, he gets a new set of skills. Slashing is the most fun, but his roar is exponentially increased, and he's even got a throw attack for those tricky hyena-killing moments.

Of course, in real life, a fully-grown lion could tear apart a hyena in its sleep. The only animal which might stand a chance is an adult grizzly bear. A quick vote on this in the office was inconclusive. So if any zoo vets (or any other wild animal experts) are reading this, please tell us – who would win in a fight between a lion and a grizzly?

Imagine how smoothly the upper-class cub moves.

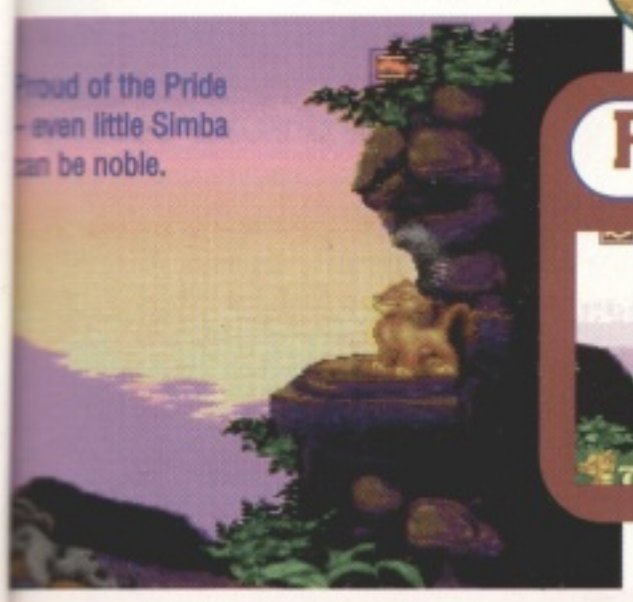
Remember, there's always roar-power when you need to express yourself.

THE ONCE AND FUTILE KING

Here there are a handful of monkeys in a series of strategically-placed trees. By roaring at certain ones, you can 'aim' them. Then bounce on the head of a browsing rhino and get fired back and forth between the monkeys, who toss you about like a basketball, eventually dumping you unceremoniously where, roughly, you're supposed to be.

It doesn't harm the Lion King, and we at *Super Play* suggest that we treat our monarchy in a similar manner. Although some would say we already do... (*is this meant to be satire James? – Debs*).

The monkey-throwing bit is rather degrading.



RUN, SIMBA!

Piecing together the screens (which doesn't work that well) gives an idea of the layout.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

The film is a triumph of animation, as everybody with working eyeballs knows. And this, being a licence, must live up to that. Also, there are lots of moral threads in the tale of the *Lion King*. This, being a licence, must somehow avoid these and be a great game instead. So does it work?

Yes indeed, it does work. Rather well, in fact. It's reduced to the level of a platform game, but that's what everybody expected. You start off as the naive cub who must learn (on the first level, at least), what he's capable of in the big wide world.

This would appear to be running, jumping on animals, jumping between platforms and the occasionally squeaky roar. Being the future king of the animals, he also has a forward roll which bashes things out of the way.

And as you proceed, you'll realize that while the graphics are marvellous, the sound almost film-like in its quality and the finish highly polished, it's still a platform game with little in the way of new ideas.

Jump, run and bash up baddies. Time things right and explore the crevices and crannies for extra bonuses. All looking beautiful and sounding superb. Disney Studios had a go at the animation, and they obviously know what they're doing. Simba the cub moves smoothly and as if he has weight – and this is emphasised when you try jumping and rushing around. By the time you've finished being impressed with this, he grows up and is a fully-fledged lion – more weight and more impressive movement.

There are ten levels in *Lion King*, which is a fair amount, and two bonus levels are also hidden in the game (the experienced platform player will have no problems finding these). There are also loads of things to collect, and as well as keeping a eye on your health, you must also watch the roar meter (roaring is a useful way of combating hyenas and the like).

Okay. You know it's a platform game now, and you're still reading this review. If you're a Lion King addict or you know a SNES-owning young-un who is, it's probably the ideal game. But it has to be said – this isn't as good as *Earthworm Jim*.

● James Leach

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92%	88%	81%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
80%		82%

VERDICT: A very high-quality platform game with little in the way of innovation. Everybody who loves platformers, great graphics and the *Lion King* start queuing over there. Everybody who wants something new to play on their SNES, follow me.

THE FIREMEN

Fractured as pipes plus naked flames equals pain.

Scorchio! The MetroTech building of New York turns into the world's most expensive bonfire.

Danny and Pete, the heroes of our hot tale.

BACKDRAFT

This is a sort of boss. It ranges around the basement area of the building and fires off chunks of plasma from itself. Like all bosses in all games, though, you must work out where to stand, where to run and where and when to fire at the chap in order to kill it. If you've got water-bombs, get ready to use them now.

Right: Danny beats out the flames with a sort of shovel things. And very effective it is too.

The flamey basement bits are certainly the toughest sections to get through unscathed.

Explosions can occur as well. There are plenty of mini-boss baddies (some of which are robots out-of-control and on-fire) to splash.

Japanese Release

Game: The Firemen
Publisher: Human
Developer: In-house
Price: £55 approx
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit
Adaptor: NTSC only

WATER BOMBS AHOY!

The most effective weapon in the firefighter's armoury is the water bomb. These create a huge circular splash and are particularly good against bosses. They act like smart bombs and surround Pete and Daniel with a barrier of water, thus preventing attack.

The trouble is, you only get a limited number of the things.

The big jet of water is perfect for roaming flames and that.

Below: Some bits of the building are quite pretty. It's a shame that they're all being incinerated at a terrific rate (and getting soaked by you, as well).

Mad robot boss ahoy! Water bombs are the best bet here. What? You've run out??!

You don't have to extinguish all the flames, but you must get rid of all the roaming blazes, which keep setting light to other parts of the level if you leave them.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Everybody who breezes through the *Super Play* office and sees Firemen says the same thing, 'What a good idea for a game! Why hasn't someone thought of it before?' We always answer with, 'Get out of our office and don't ask stupid questions.'

But it's true. A neat idea of a game, done neatly. You and your mate (the characters are called Pete and Daniel for some reason) must enter a massive, multi-story building, which is healthily ablaze, with the intention of extinguishing the conflagration and rescuing the comatose occupants within. As it's a chemical plant as well, you must get all the explosive elements up to the roof and detonate them next to the water tank, which will disgorge its contents down through the building, putting out any remaining flames and leaving the building with a permanent damp problem.

Oblique views of the action are the order of the day, and as you move from room to room, you soon get a feel for the range, power and abilities of your hoses. The other thing which takes a bit of practice is the eight-way movement. Personally, I've always been a bit frustrated by eight-way-moving characters because you always seem to be needing to move or fire in the direction between two of the points. Aaargh! Totally infuriating!

Anyway, that's not the fault of this game. *The Firemen* is a lot of fun when you start getting into it, and the added tension of the time limit helps a lot. You're given percentages of each level, so you must balance the need to rush through to the chemicals with the amount of en-route extinguishing you have to do.

And there are even bosses as well. Sure, they look like something out of *Secret Of Mana* (all fire and aggression), but some are remarkably tricky to splash to death.

So why doesn't *The Firemen* get a better mark? Because it's too samey. All you're really doing is charging around, getting into the right position in front of the flames and switching between the power-hose and the splashy close-range hose. Sure, there are plenty of locations, but once you've cleared a couple of floors, they all start to look rather similar.

So a great idea is made into a potentially great game. Spoiled only by the fact that in the first five minutes you've virtually seen it all.

● James Leach

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
84%	75%	79%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	75%
71%		

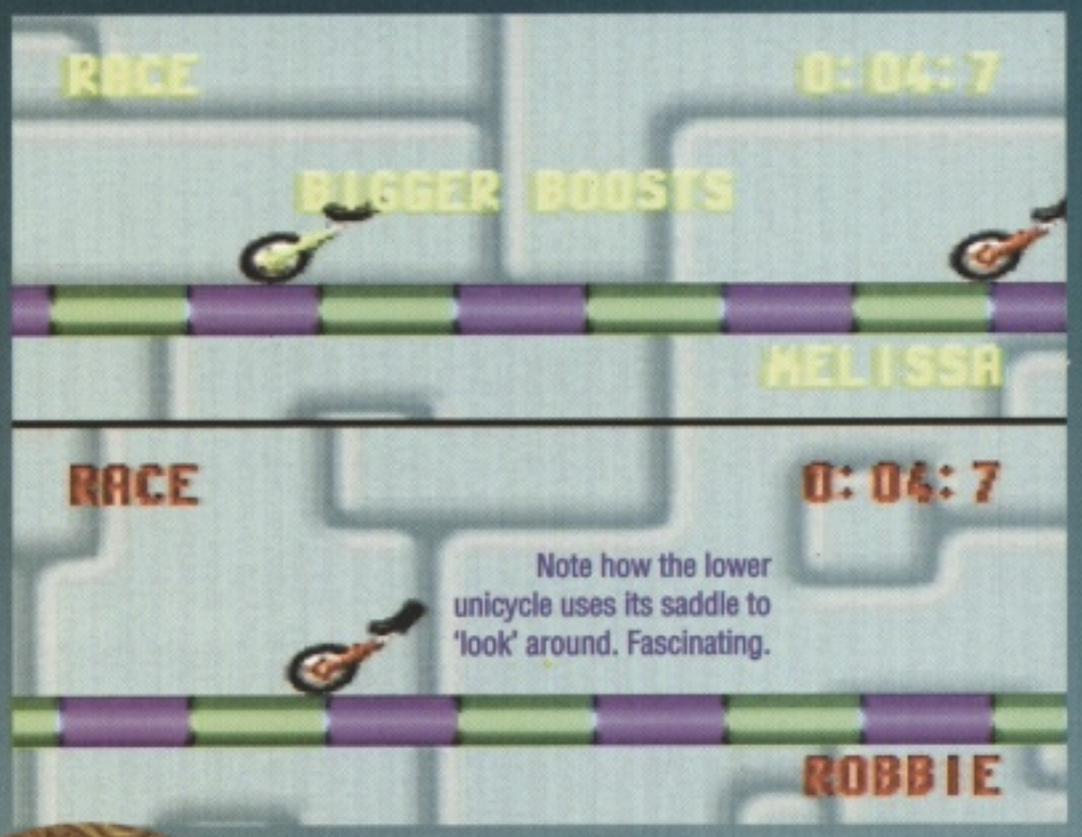
VERDICT: **Original, fun and quite tricky. But the lack of variety gets boring and you'll wish for some extras to keep your interest.**

UNIRALLY

Where do you usually see unicycles? Circuses and inner-city street festivals. And what happens at circuses or inner-city festivals? You eat loads of candyfloss and get bored. Sometimes you feel sick, too.

UK Release

Game: Unirally
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: DMA
Price: £40
Release: March
Players: 1 or 2 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 4 Mbit
Adaptor: Any



Note how the lower unicycle uses its saddle to 'look' around. Fascinating.

Wipeout isn't as terminal as it sounds. So don't worry.

Honest – if you watch this in real time it wouldn't be quite as boring.

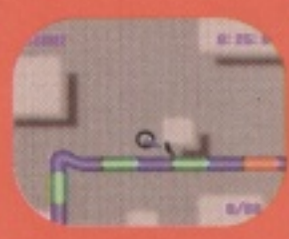
TAKE YOUR LIFE IN YOUR HANDS

To get extra speed when you're racing around the courses, you need to pull off some stunts. These range from the simple to the ridiculously complex. The more you do, the better your chances of winning.

TWIST

The simplest move. Just jump into the air and hold down A. On a level portion of track you can get one twist in, and thus boost your speed a little. If you zoom off a jump or over the crest of a rise, you can get three or move twists in. Very good news.

ROLL

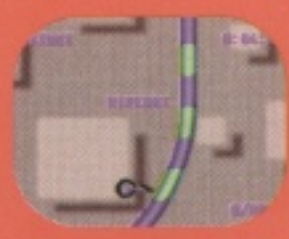


This is a forward somersault in the air, the only other move you can carry out whilst belting along on the flat. If you're a bit sharp, combining these with twists will give you loads of extra speed.

FLIP

Like a roll, only backwards. Because of this, it takes longer to do and requires more time in the air. Best to do these when you've just gone over a jump and you've got loads of airborne time.

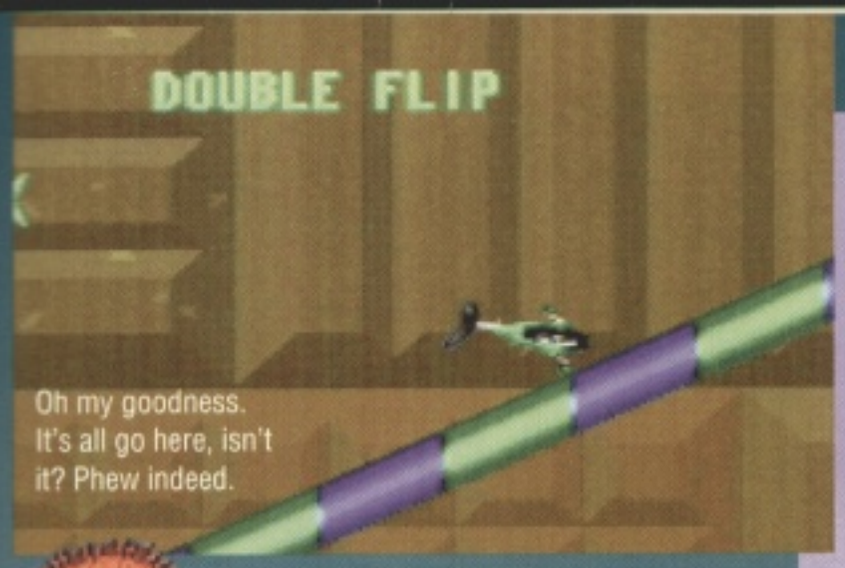
ZEE



Reversing the direction you're pointing in mid-air, this is a neat one to pull off. Generally, it's best to limit them to the bonus stunt tracks where there's no danger of cocking it up and losing the race.

TABLETOP

Putting the unicycle on its side in the air, then recovering it before thumping back down to earth. An easy one if you've got a jump big enough. What's neat (and helps with the speed) is when you combine a few tabletops with some twists.



Oh my goodness. It's all go here, isn't it? Phew indeed.

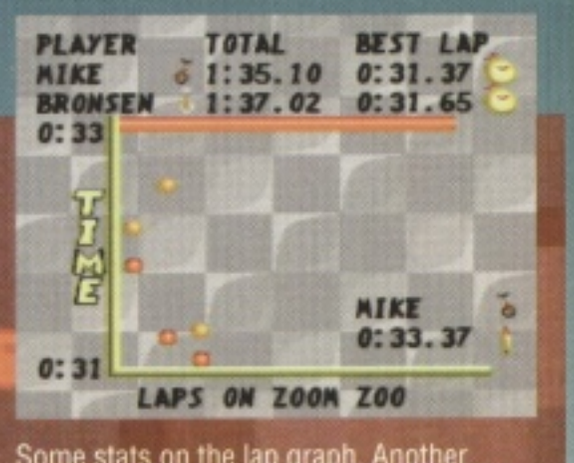
Well *you* try writing captions for something that looks like this! It's bleedin' tricky, believe me.

Below: Oh heavens. Make your own caption up for this picture.

FIVE THINGS HARDER TO DO THAN RIDING A THAN UNICYCLE

1. Learning Japanese.
2. Remaining cheerful after an episode of *EastEnders*.
3. *University Challenge*.
4. Eating haggis.
5. Singing along to the Cocteau Twins.

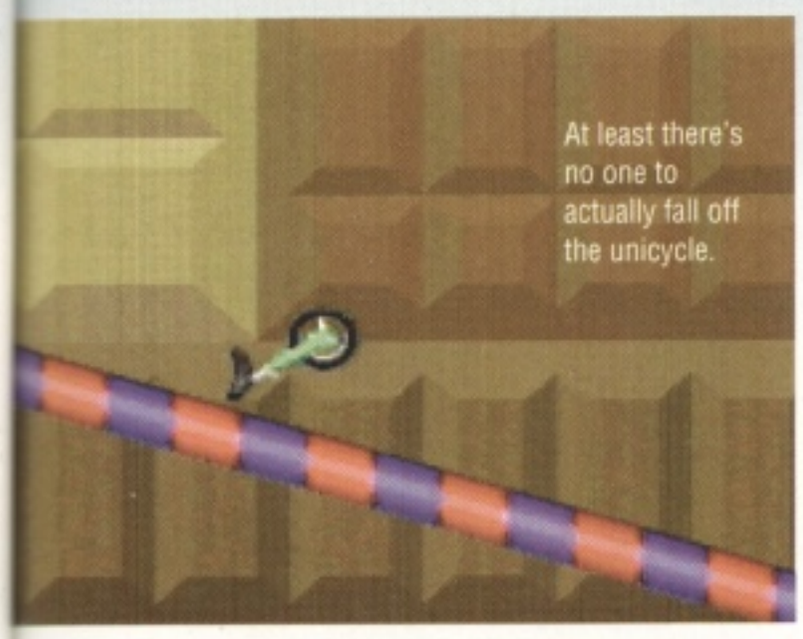
A waving flag thing. That at least is quite interesting.



Some stats on the lap graph. Another vaguely fascinating screenshot. With little blobby things all over it.

GRAPH THE BASICS

After every race of more than one lap, a graph showing how you and your opponent did over each lap appears. It also gives you information on your fastest lap, and that of your foe, as well as the fastest recorded lap on that course (which will be saved on the battery back-up). The stats are certainly worth having and once you've beaten the CPU at every circuit, you'll return to your favourites simply to get faster and faster at them.

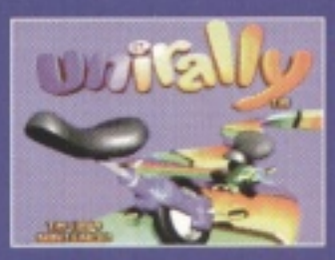


At least there's no one to actually fall off the unicycle.

READING BETWEEN THE LINES

The tracks are all different, and the colourful stripes all mean something. The orange sections always surround the gluey stuff so when you hit those, get ready with the jump button. The red bits mean that you shouldn't attempt any jumps or stunts as there's a helter-skelter bit coming up and if your wheel isn't firmly on the ground, you'll bounce back.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?



Our faces wrinkled in dismay when first we saw this effort. Sure, it's a little cheaper than many other cartridges, but the game just looked, well, out of date and, frankly, boring.

There's nothing to see; that's the trouble. A smallish unicycle, some rapidly scrolling backgrounds and that's your lot. But once you start to play *Unirally*, you'll come to realise that there's more to it than that.

There are dozens of tracks, and you must either race against another mortal or against the CPU to gain the best time on each. The programmers have got the abilities of the CPU cycles just about right for the first few games. But once you get the hang of the game, and certainly once you get to know a few of the tracks, you'll be leaving them for dust.

The only option then is to race against another person or to try and beat your best times (saved to battery back-up). This is done by leaping over the occasional glue patches and performing more stunts as you race around.

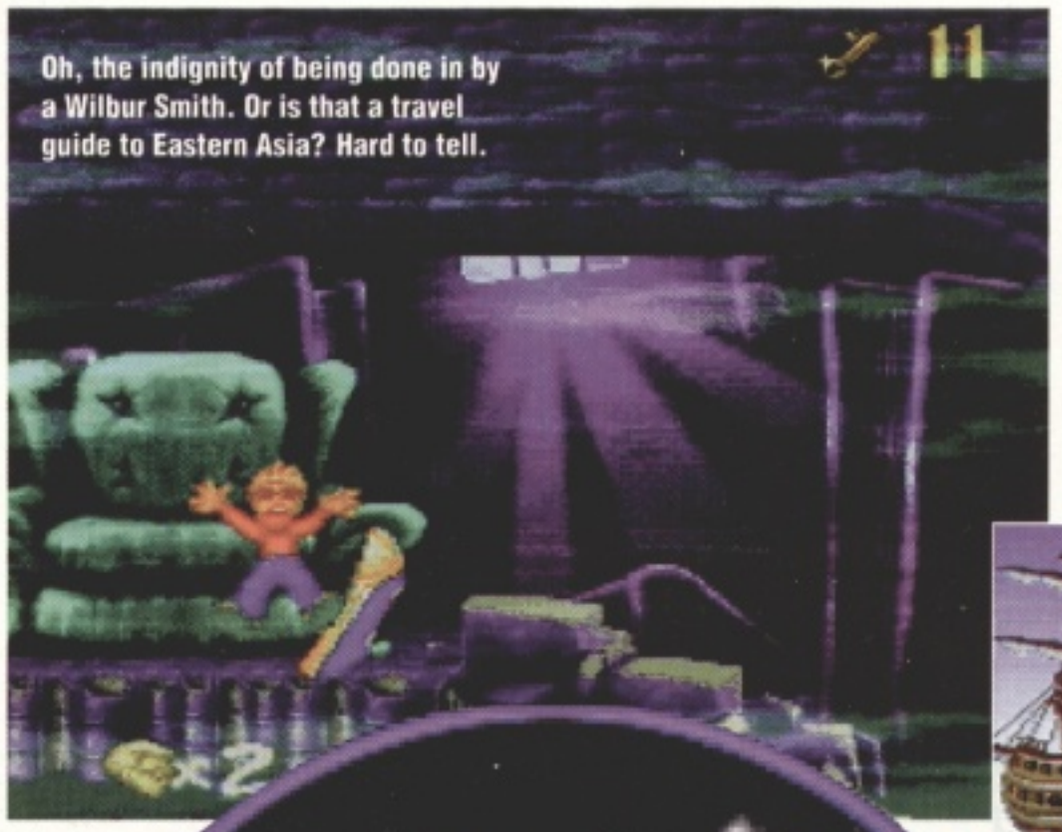
Unirally is well-programmed and getting a 'feel' for it is the first step. Once this comes, you'll stay with it for longer than you first imagined. I can't stress too much that it *looks* rubbish but plays well. Cast your eyes around this page. Not very impressive visuals from a machine (and indeed, a publisher) capable of *Donkey Kong Country* or Secret Of Mana.

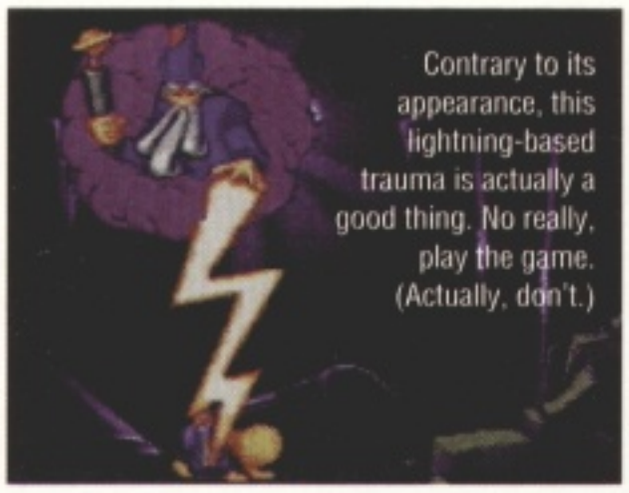
But give it a chance. As a fun racer, it's worth a go, and it shows that gameplay is more important than graphics. Here, at least.

● James Leach

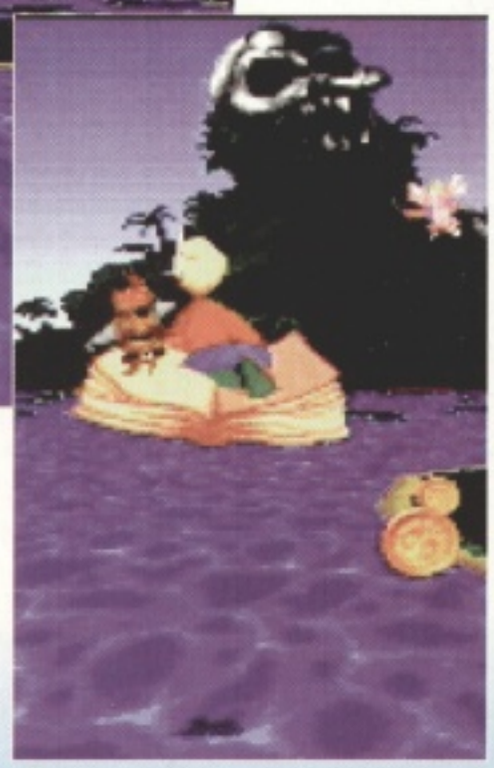
GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
42%	53%	87%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
81%		85%

VERDICT: *Unirally* is better than it looks. But it's a quirky game, and will appeal to the sort of people who love shaving hundredths of a second off their best times. Possibly *Super Mario Kart* fans.





A bonus section. Yesterday. Zinging about on a carpet collecting coins, just for a change.



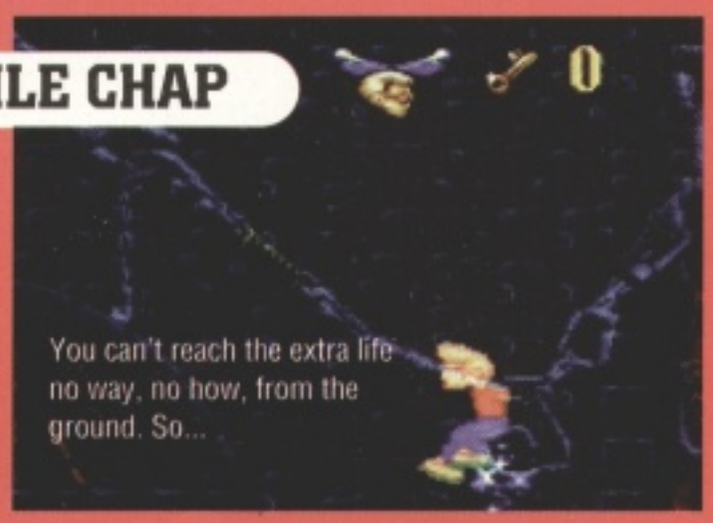
Left: 'Ghost of a Chance' is horribly difficult, while 'That's the Spirit' is horribly annoying. You really aren't spoilt for choice.

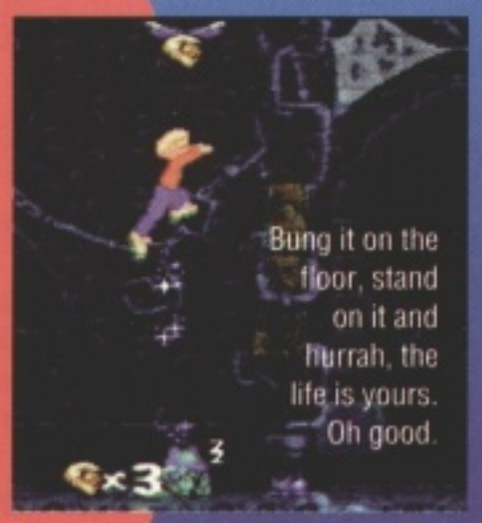
THE PAGEMA

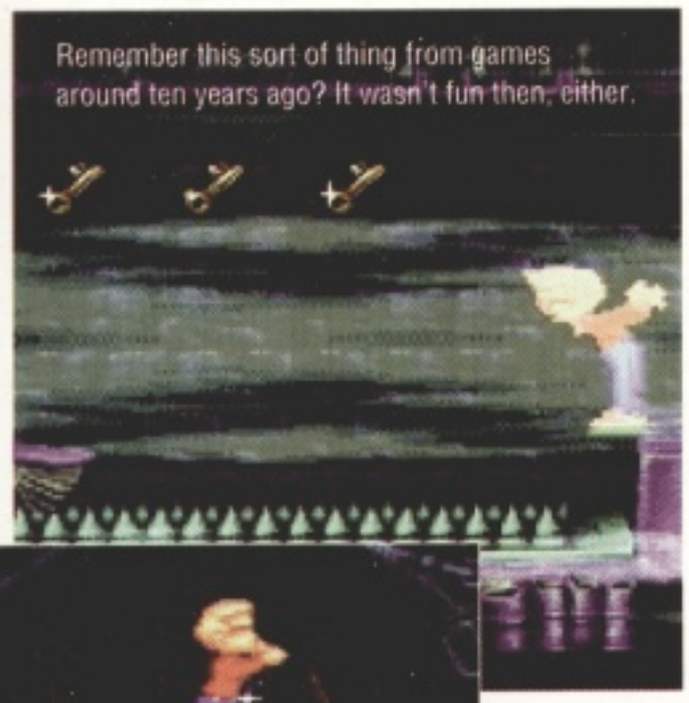
It had to happen: the first film/game ever to be based on a new range of telecommunications devices. Ed Ricketts makes the tenuous jokes.

A VERSATILE CHAP

Not two seconds into the game, you stumble rather messily upon a snoozing thing (it could be a toad, maybe). This is, in fact, one of the very few opportunities for excitement in this sad game.







Bouncy fun with a spring. Look, I'm sorry, I can't keep this up much longer. *It's not very good,* okay?

UK Release

Game: The Pagemaster
Publisher: Virgin
Developer: Probe
Price: £50
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

The place: Probe Software. The time: sometime last year. The occasion: a planning meeting for the SNES version of *The Pagemaster.*
(Note: this is not true. We made this up. Don't go quoting any of this to Probe or anything, will you?)

Important Programmer 1: Okay, we've got *The Pagemaster* licence. What I want to do in this initial session is storm some brains, thrash out those grey cells, see if anything drips out we can put in silicon.
Designer: You mean you want some ideas for the game?
Important Programmer 1: In a way, yes. Now what do we know about *The Pagemaster?*
Important Programmer 2: It's an animated film, I believe, IP1, starring that cheeky child chappie Macauley Culkin in a riveting story of fantasy, adventure and horror. And it has something to do with books, apparently.
D: So it's a cartoon, then?
IP1: Okay, let's not get too detailed here, we're looking for broad strokes. Brooooad strokes... I see a platform game. I see a sprite...
IP2: Yes, yes!
IP1: ...and this sprite, you see, looks like Macauley Culkin.
IP2: Great! Instant recognisable value. Now what could he be doing, exactly?
IP1: Well, bearing this broad strokes motif in mind, along with the platform game idea, how about running and jumping?
IP2: Love it! It works! Hang on – what about collecting things too?
IP1: You slay me, IP2. But, and here's where the strokes start looking somewhat skinnier, what?
D: Keys. I can draw keys. And skulls and things.
IP1: Hell, we're hot today. But we need something else, something to make our game stand out. Something to make it completely different to the 3,259 other platform games out there...
IP2: Bonus levels! Oh yes, oh yes, oh yes, I am HUMMING!
IP1: 3D bonus levels! Just like in *Sonic The Hedgehog.* Lads, this is going to be bigger than big. This is going to be – well, I have to say it, quite large.
D: Sounds a bit dull to me. I mean, is that it? A bit of running, collecting and that? I mean frankly if I'd bought it I'd play it once and then completely forget about it for the rest of my natural life, and that includes any cryogenically-induced extension, I might add.
IP1: That, my dear designer, is why you're drawing keys and we're -
D: I just get this horrible idea that *Super Play* are going to run a rather limp review in the form of a sketch to point out that The Pagemaster is completely and utterly average, devoid of any originality, and it's not even particularly good fun to play. That's all.
IP1: Nonsense. IP2 and myself have been in this business for – ooh, four months now, so I'm pretty damn sure than when an idea for a great game comes knocking, we know to let it in rather than hiding behind the curtains and keeping very quiet.
D: Eh?
IP2: I think that just about does it, gentlemen. First version by next week then?
IP1: Damn right. Now let's do lunch. Not you, mate, we need those keys pronto.

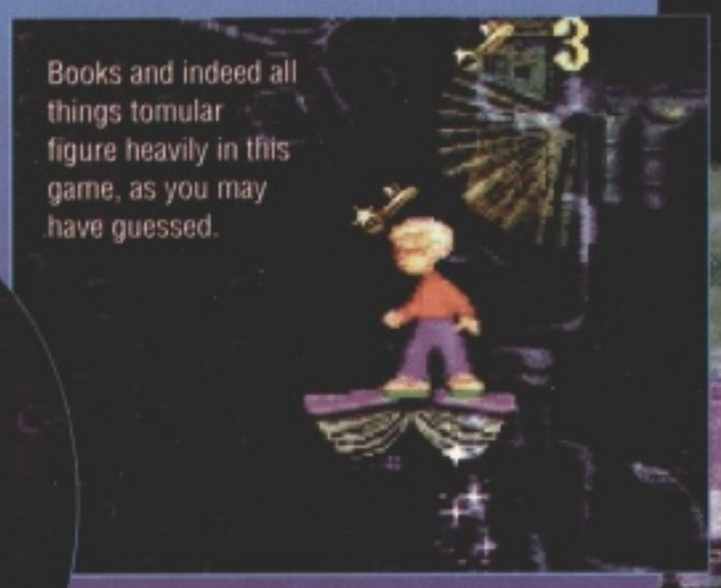
● Ed Ricketts

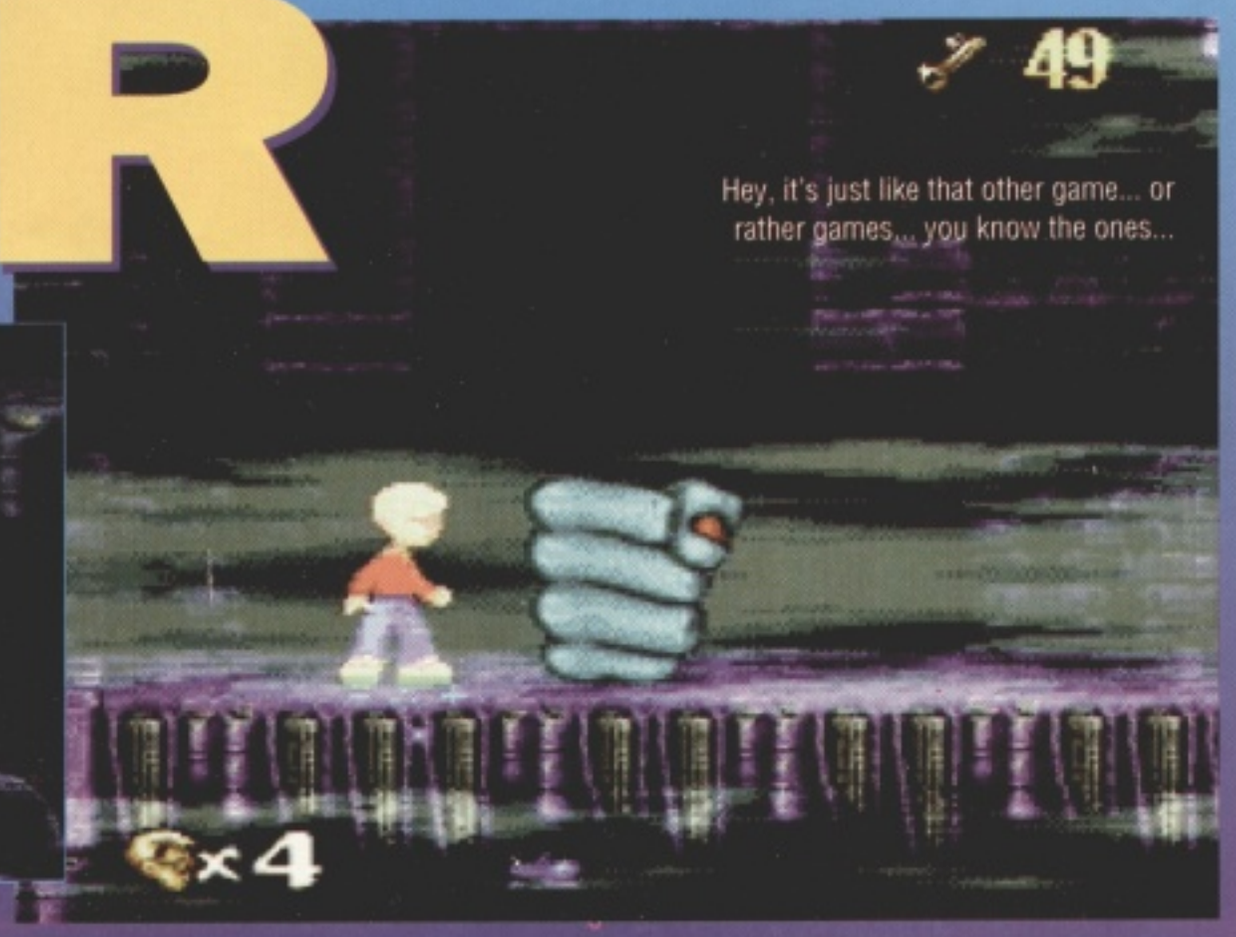
GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
67%	61%	58%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
62%		61%

VERDICT: Oh dear, another insipid licence tie-in thing. Dull, unoriginal, and not even very pretty. (And that's just the title screen. Ho ho.)

STER

You know how they say about books 'I couldn't put it down?' Well this is much the same, only in reverse, sort of.





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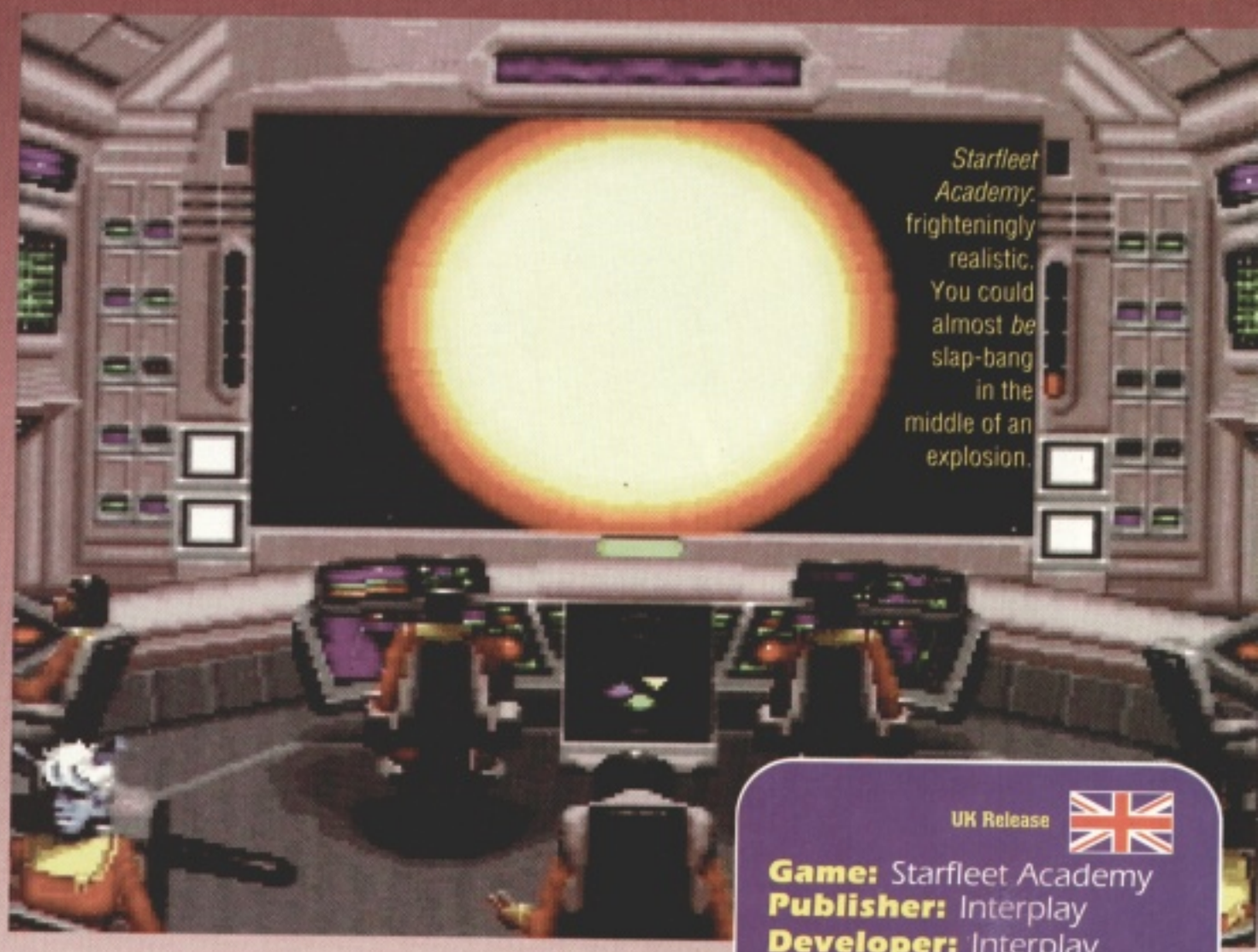
STAR TREK STARFLEET

Star Trek: post-post-modern kitsch for the post-MTV generation, or just not very good really? Post-intelligent Ed Ricketts doesn't even understand the question.

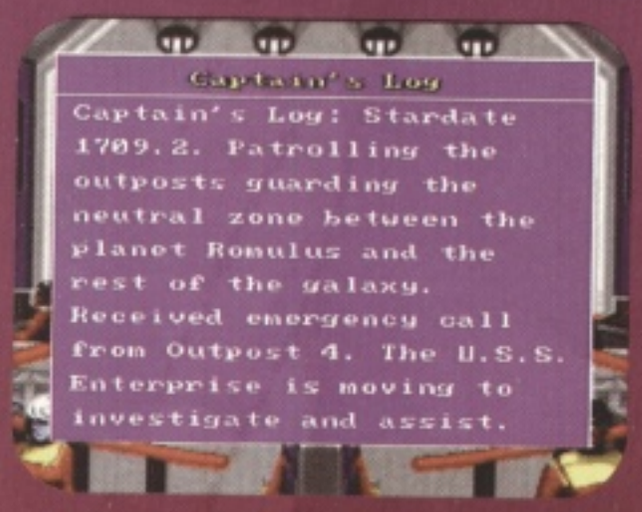


Starfleet Academy: frighteningly realistic. You could almost *be* slap-bang in the middle of an explosion.

MAKE IT SO

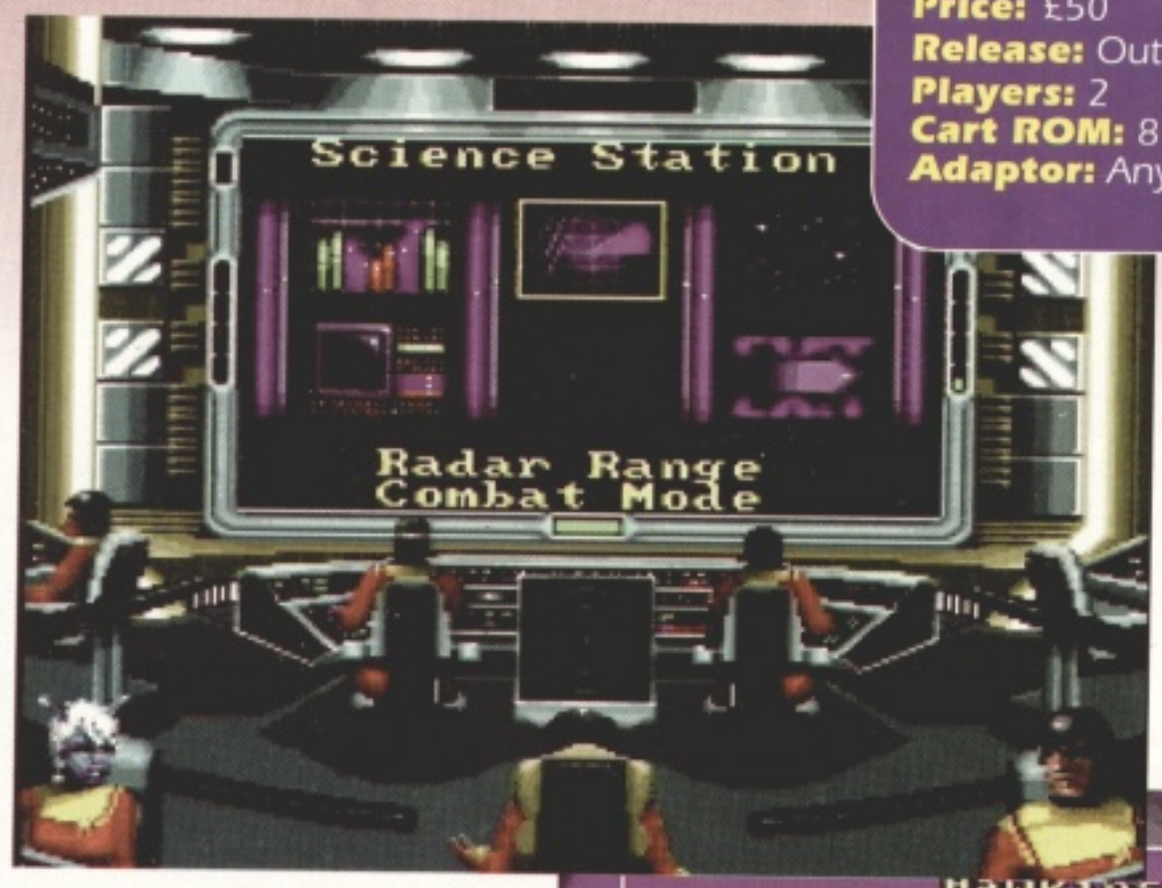
Apparently becoming a Starfleet Commander is a piece of cake. All you need do is shoot a few stationary ships, navigate some buoys, and you're pretty much there. A bald Englishman could do it. With his eyes closed, probably.

See? A short fracas with another ship...

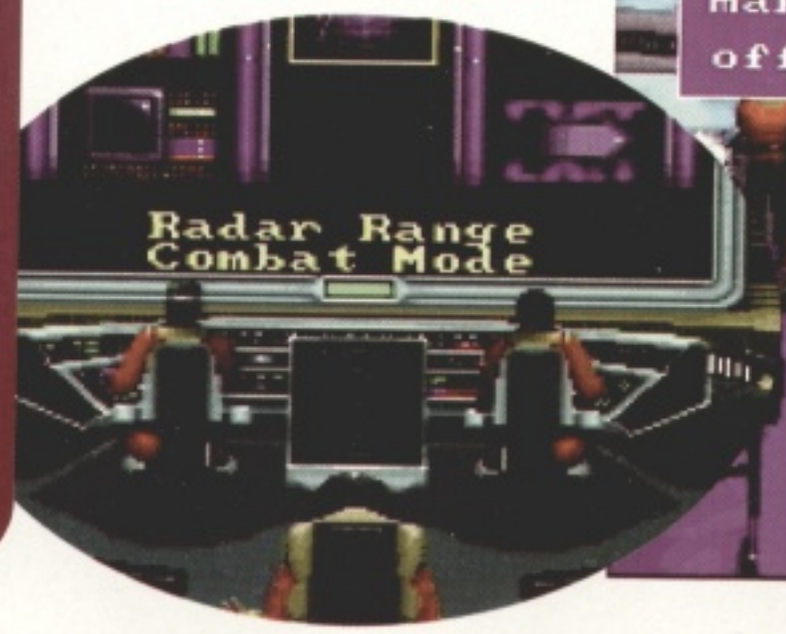

Captain's Log
Captain's Log: Stardate 1709.2. Patrolling the outposts guarding the neutral zone between the planet Romulus and the rest of the galaxy. Received emergency call from Outpost 4. The U.S.S. Enterprise is moving to investigate and assist.

...some quite pointless plot to fill in time...

...followed by buoy navigation. *Very* tricky, that.



'Do you fancy a beer?' No, I think I'll stay and watch this a bit longer.'

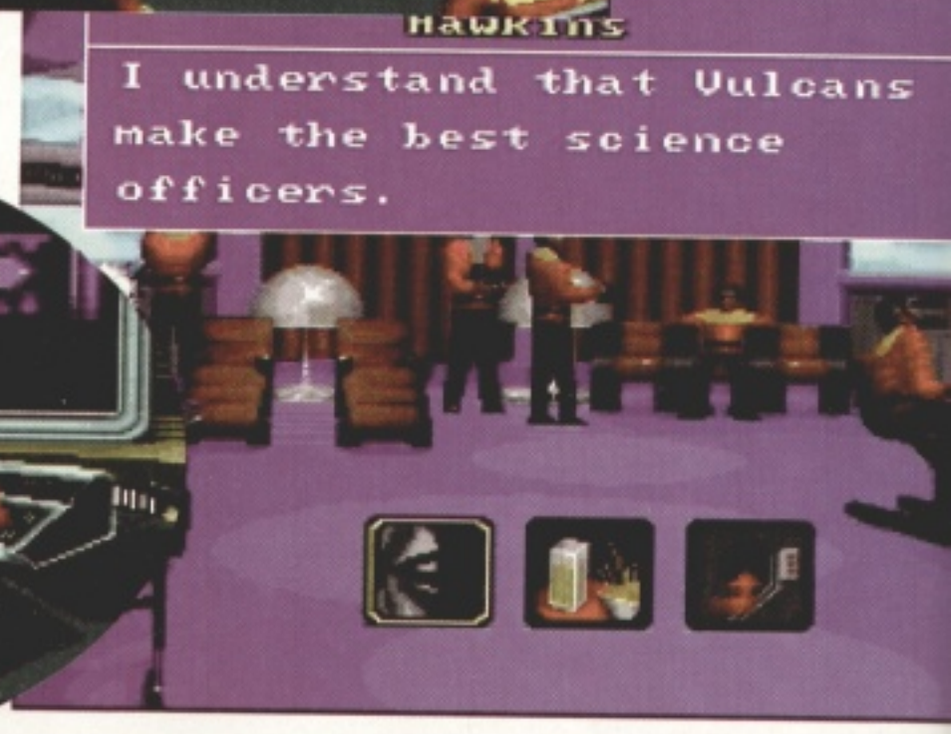


UK Release

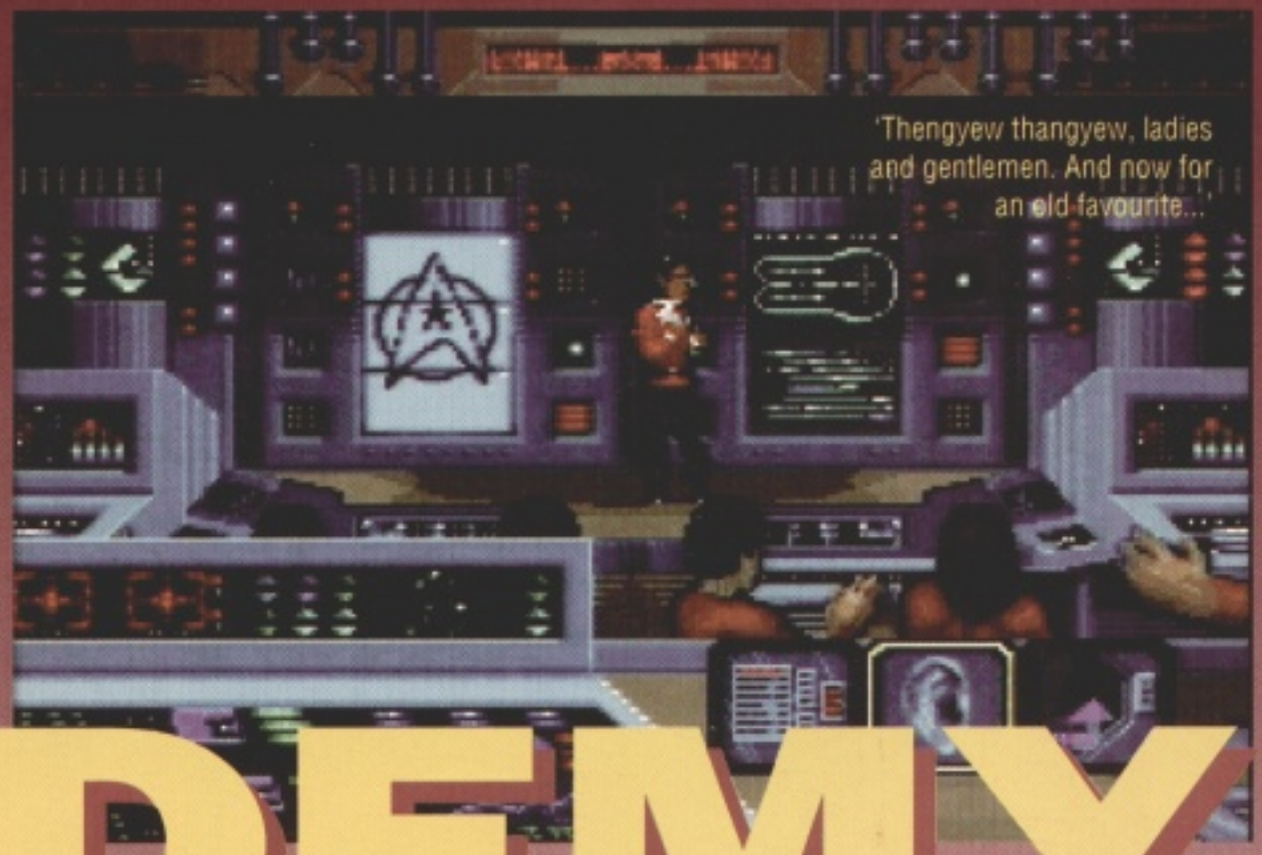
Game: Starfleet Academy
Publisher: Interplay
Developer: Interplay
Price: £50
Release: Out now
Players: 2
Cart ROM: 8 Mbits
Adaptor: Any

So much to choose from, so little to interest you. Except that girl at the front with the odd hair.

Ha ha ha. Hawkins makes one of the Federation's oldest and least understood jokes.



Ah yes, the deeply complex workings of an interstellar spacecraft, of course.

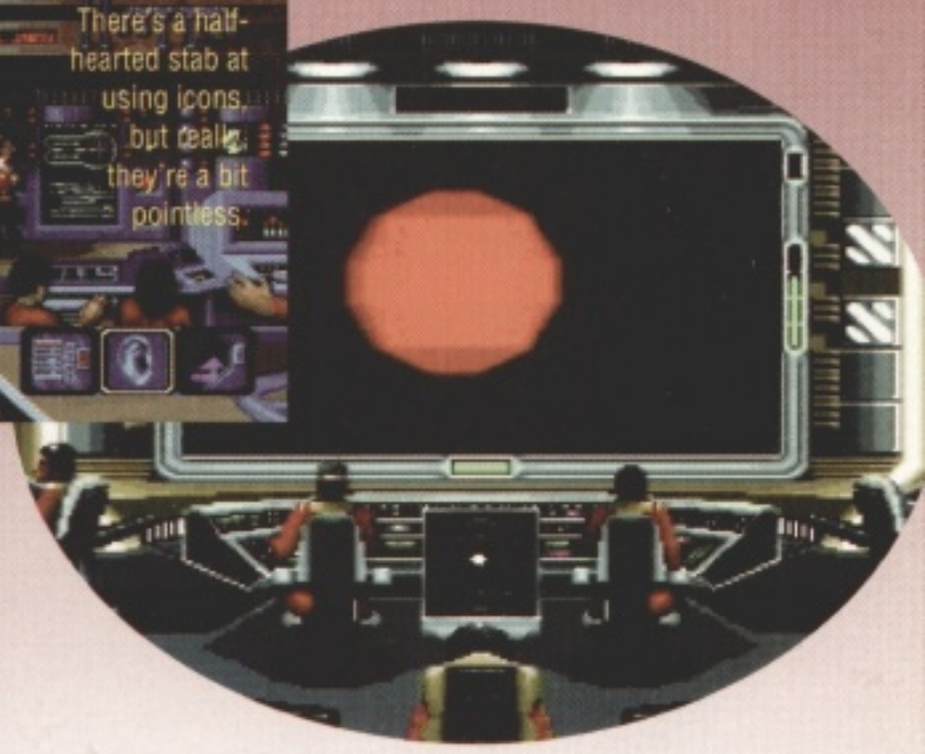

'Thengyew thangyew, ladies and gentlemen. And now for an old favourite...'

ACADEMY

BRIDGE SIMULATOR

Hey, it's just like Battleships. Or something.

There's a half-hearted stab at using icons, but really they're a bit pointless.


'Captain, I've picked up a large red sphere.' 'Well see the doctor then.' 'Oh bugger off.'

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Should you ever be faced with a situation in which you're required to offend a great deal of people in a short amount of time, there's one simple thing to ascertain first: do they like *Star Trek?* If so, you're on to a winner. Because after your quick runthrough of how ridiculous the cod moralising is, how stupid the folk playing aliens must feel, how limp and worthless the plotlines are and how Wesley Crusher should be diced into small cubes, laced with vinegar and then thrown away, they'll hate you for life.

Ahem. Assuming, then, you haven't just set fire to the magazine, here's the deal: Starfleet Academy is actually quite good, if that's not putting too fine a point on it. As a trainee captain you've just arrived at the Academy, which offers a range of modern facilities. Why not visit the computer room where you can catch up on the latest operating systems? Then perhaps a trip to the basic simulator for a spot of navigation training; or simply relax in the canteen, have a bite to eat and talk to the other trainees about how silly their uniforms look.

Eventually, though, you have to get down to the unreal business of simulation if you want to become a Captain. The missions are arranged into sections (named after the *Star Trek* films, God help us) of increasing difficulty. At first you're led by the hand through each with specific orders at every stage. Later, you simply have an objective and it's up to you to fulfill it.

These missions aren't especially complex; they involve a) blowing something up, b) picking something up with your tractor beam and transporting it elsewhere, c) having a bit of a chat to some alien races, or d) all of the above. Option a) is of course the most fun, though the combat is no *Starwing:* a tiny viewing window with fairly plain 3D graphics doesn't make for anything spectacular. Still, there are enough variants on this theme to keep you at it for a while, though everything tends to plod along in a distinctly un-hectic way. The 3D graphics chug horribly when the screen fills up, and finding the targets in-flight can sometimes be awkward because they disappear from the radar for no reason. On top of fighting, you have to look after navigation, communications and engineering, repairing damage where necessary and making sure you're in the right bit of space.

While there's plenty to do in *Starfleet Academy*, both on the base and in space, it never really feels like fun. You simply wade through missions unthinkingly without getting much sense of achievement. Perhaps the problem is that neither the 'strategic' side nor the combat is startlingly good, so put together they produce a game which is almost interesting but not quite. Actually the real problem is that it's based on *Star Trek*, of course, a programme so far up its own bum that it's living in the dark. (No, I don't know what that's supposed to mean either, but you get the idea.)

● Ed Ricketts

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
74%	70%	79%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
81%		77%

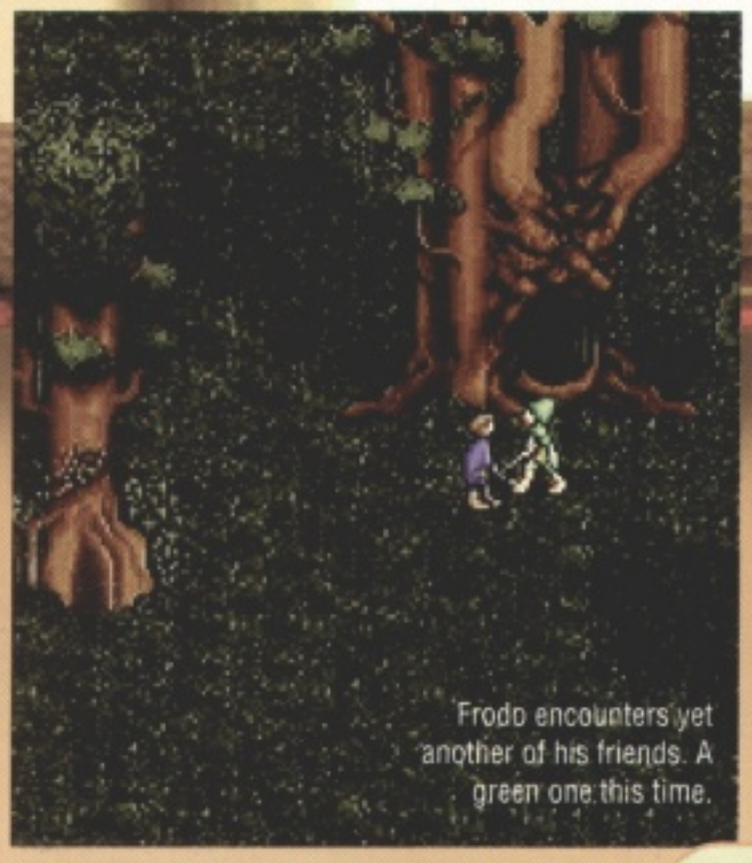
VERDICT: Far too slow, and steeped in the usual *Star Trek* nonsense, but reasonably enjoyable for all that. It's not going to make you explode in joy, though.

UK Release

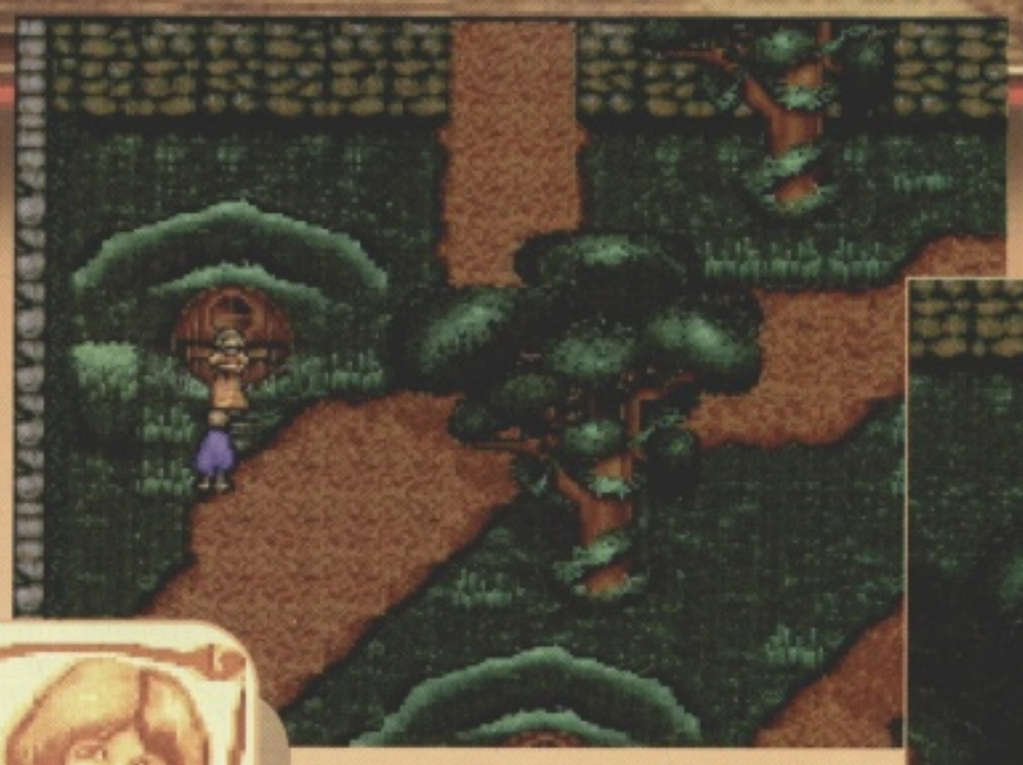
Game: Lord Of The Rings
Publisher: Interplay
Developer: In-house
Price: £50
Release: Out Now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 16 Mbit

LORD OF THE RINGS

***Lord Of The Rings* arrives with a fanfare. Like out of the olden days. Before they had synthesisers and Jean Claude van Jarre or whatever he's called.**



Frodo encounters yet another of his friends. A green one this time.



Wandering around the village reveals useful clues, but not too much plot.

This fella in red is looking for someone else's lost glasses.

Crikey! It's Gandalf, the hippy. Sorry, wizard. Where's he going, eh?

FRIENDS OF FRODO

As you explore Middle Earth, you'll meet a variety of helpful chums. These fellas and creatures do tend to get killed very easily, so joining them may not be as charitable as it sounds. They just sort of follow you around. A word of warning, don't take any of them into the caves. Here for example, is what happens to your first chum (usually).

Frodo looks like he's just eaten some poo.

Don't take Pippin into the caves because he'll get killed by bats, as displayed here in this rather dark screenshot.

Ooh! Mist of magical origin, no doubt, and it looks like dandruff.

SAVING YOUR LIFE

You'd think a game like this would have battery backup, but sadly this isn't the case. What you need is a biro pen and reams of paper, in order to jot down the infuriatingly large level codes, as well as the reasonably huge inventory codes. People who work for secret government encryption departments might find all this jolly amusing, but we certainly don't.

Crikey! The password screen is more complicated and difficult than the game.

Chaos ensues as several sprites cause the SNES to slow down dramatically.

Frodo encounters an episode of the *Archers*. Ha, ha, hardy, har, har.

Blimey, these trees are big. I wonder if any vitally important clues are hidden round here?

Little dialogue boxes inform you of your situation, as opposed to good self-explanatory graphics.

'Hey you! Fancy coming with us on a top mystic adventure?'
'No ta. I'll just play golf here.'

The wolves look dangerous, but simply thrash the 'A' button to kill 'em.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Oh dear. A huge project from the outset, *Lord Of The Rings* has been in development since 1992, and made its début at the 1993 Winter CES in Las Vegas. Since then, the only thing that has changed is the size of the game. For a project that took at least three years to reach fruition, this is a rather abysmal effort. One would imagine arses have been kicked.

If they haven't, then they should be. Let's start with the graphics. Someone ought to. Considering the SNES has a palette of over 32,000 colours, things are looking a tad mysterious. Perhaps the graphics in *Lord Of The Rings* were deliberately drabified in order to create an atmosphere of fantastic and medieval dread. Instead they create an atmosphere of vague boredom.

The sprites are erm, economical to say the least. Tiny, with no detail and repeated frequently (with colours changed for a bit of variety). Animation is almost non existent. The character of Frodo minces around in a jerky and unconvincing fashion, as do the various creatures that inhabit the world of Middle Earth.

Gameplay is unfortunately no better. Frodo has to complete a set of tasks in fairly strict order, as the story unfolds. Some creative license is used, but you do at least follow the general direction of the book. Other than that this is a simplistic hack-'em-up. Frodo moves (slowly) in only four directions which is most irritating to say the least.

In its defence, the game is pretty big. There's an awful lot of plot to unfold and the music is pretty cool. Unfortunately, these plus points just aren't enough to recommend what is ultimately a frustrating and unenjoyable experience.

● Frank O'Connor

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
64%	90%	44%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	52%
70%		

VERDICT: A stunningly bad effort, saved only by the huge nature of the task and the dedication to accuracy. If the graphics and general gameplay had been tweaked, this could have been a success. As it stands, *Lord Of The Rings* is a pretty apt name. Think about it.

BADDIES

Although the baddies in *Lord Of The Rings* are imaginative and clever. They all look completely rubbish, instilling no atmosphere whatsoever. Shame really.

Crikey! Badly animated soldiers from hell.

A troll, or an orc or something. I know it's not a dragon, anyway.

Run away, they're impossible to kill and they smell a bit funny.

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MICHAEL JORDAN

CHAOS IN THE WINDY CITY

5.7 seconds, that's how long Michael Jordan stayed in the air on a slam dunk, but will the game last longer?

UK Release

Game: Michael Jordan – Chaos In The Windy City
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: In-house
Price: £50
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 16 Mbit

This is a bonus room, hidden near the end of Level 1, in a door and through a big warp!

CRAZY COMIC CAPERS

Hello, what's this? It's obviously some kind of cartoon intro thing and it's pretty much self-explanatory, albeit a bit corny. Those Americans, with their strange ballgames and 60-foot-tall athletes. They don't half make me laugh. And cry sometimes too. The Japanese are alright, you're safe with them, predictably logical, if you will.

IT'S A WINDY DAY IN CHICAGO. FIRST PRACTICE FOR AN ALL-STAR CHARITY GAME. MICHAEL SHOWS UP AND FINDS HIS TEAM HAS DISAPPEARED...
THEIR STUFF IS HERE BUT THEY'RE NOT! THIS IS WEIRD.
SUDDENLY, THROUGH A SKYLIGHT

Blimey! What's all this trouble then, eh?

CRASH!
A BALL WITH A NOTE SCRAWLED ON IT
MR. JORDAN - IF YOU WANT TO SAVE YOUR PALS, COME TO THE EGYPTIAN ROOM IN THE FIELD MUSEUM AT MIDNIGHT. COME ALONE!
DR. MAX CRANIUM

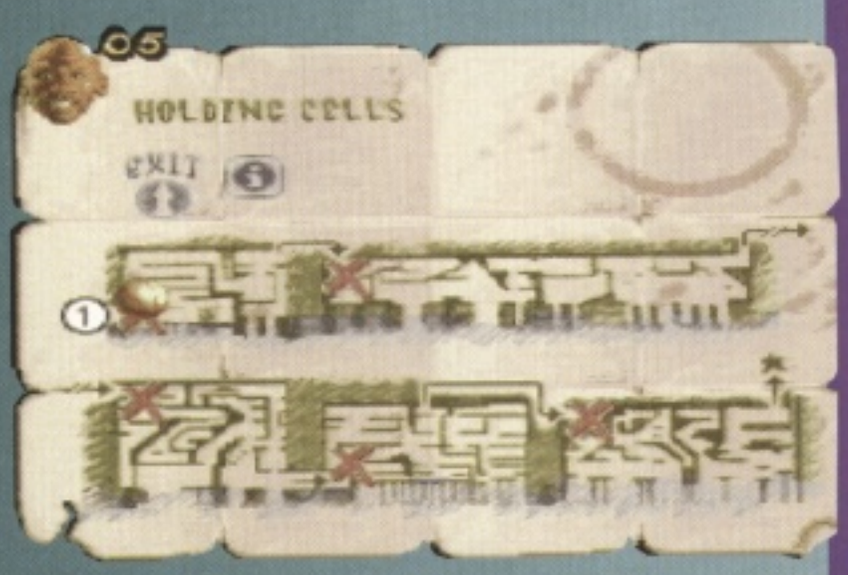
I'd better use my basketball related skills to save the day.

MAN, THIS IS SERIOUS! BETTER CHECK IT OUT.
THAT NIGHT, A GUARD LETS MICHAEL INTO THE CLOSED MUSEUM.
IN THE EGYPTIAN ROOM —
EEEEEK!
HELL, I'M HERE NOW WHAT? HEY, A DOOR IN THE WALL!

Like erm, scoring baskets and jumping about.

EEEEEK!
HELL, I'M HERE NOW WHAT? HEY, A DOOR IN THE WALL!
HE ENTERS HAPPILY...
WHAT THE...?!
FINDING HIMSELF AT THE ENTRANCE TO AN UNDERGROUND EMPIRE, MICHAEL SETS OUT TO FIND HIS FRIENDS!

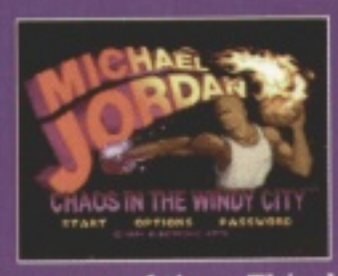
And I have absolutely huge feet you know. Size 17.



This map shows you how large each level is – most welcome in these days of short platformers.

Releasing pals also releases useful information. Well, sort of useful anyway.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?



Platform games and basketball games have never mixed until now. Beat-'em-ups and basketball games have though, so it was only a matter of time. This, however, is a more successful effort than *Shaq Fu*. As a matter of fact, this is a pretty good game in its own right, basketball or no basketball. And it's got Michael Jordan in it.

This does have a bit in common with *Soccer Kid*, in that you have to use a ball as both weapon and tool. The difference is that this one is easy to control and a bit more fun. The 'chaos' referred to in the title is the fact that a bunch of basketball players have been kidnapped and locked up in various locations in Chicago (the Windy City).

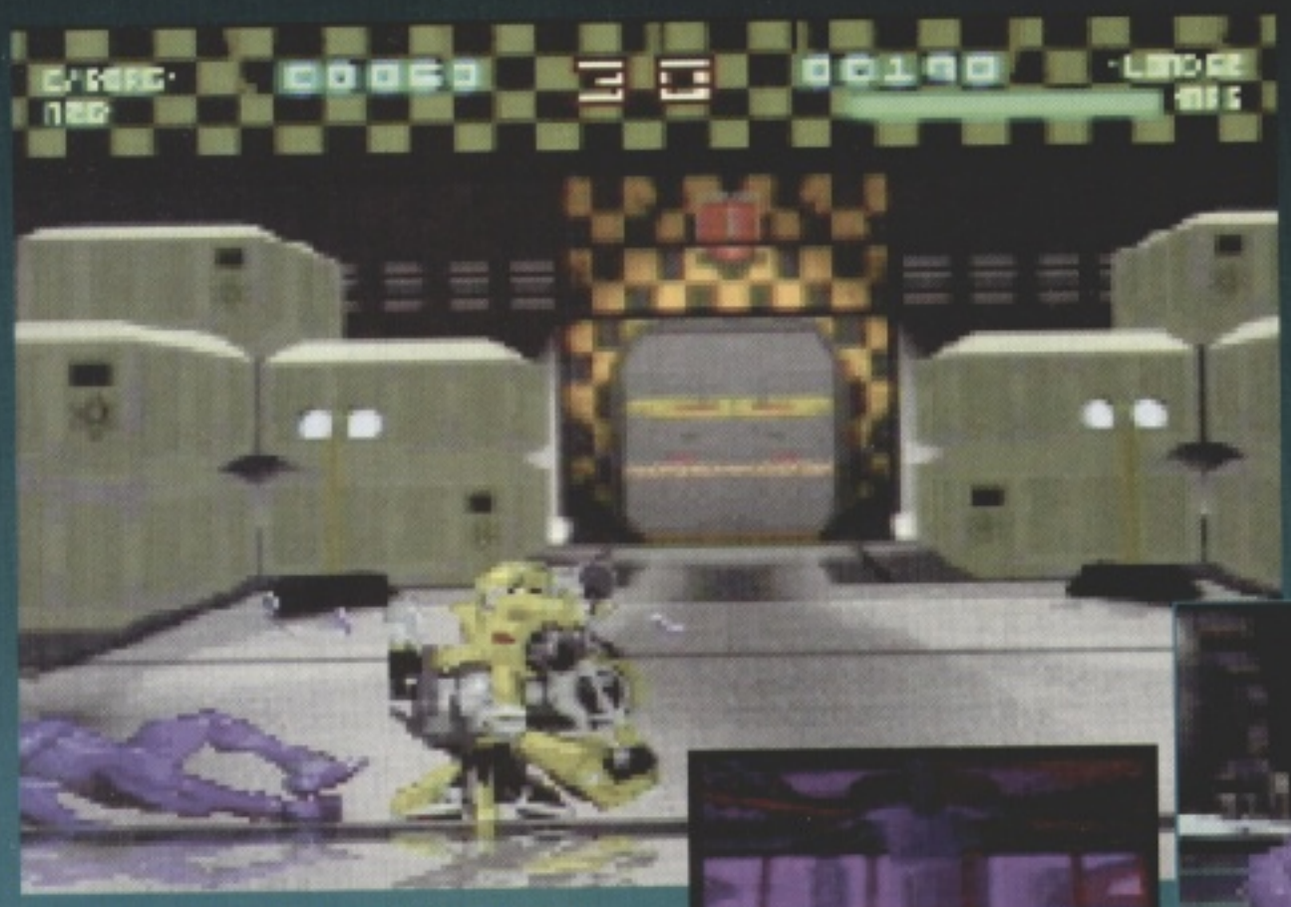
Your task is to rescue these players, basically by leaping around, collecting keys and killing supernatural baddies with a basketball. There are numerous power-ups to collect, most of which affect the power and range of your basketball weapon. To find these, you have to 'dunk' basketballs into the nets which are randomly and mysteriously scattered all over the levels.

Chaos In The Windy City plays well. The game is huge, lots of levels and sub-levels, and plenty of variety between them. There are also a number of secret bonus levels hidden throughout the game. The Jordan sprite is smooth and fluid, with plenty of character. It should be stressed, though, that you don't need to like basketball or Michael Jordan to enjoy this. You just have to enjoy platform games.

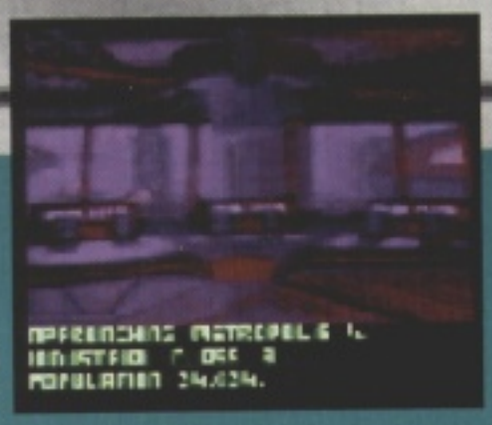
● Frank O'Connor

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
81%	80%	82%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
85%		83%

VERDICT: A high-quality platform game, hidden under a bizarre plot and a great deal of licensing. A pretty rare thing these days and all the more laudable for it. Hooray!



Felled again, you lie there considering whether getting up is actually worth it.



Dull and pointless information screens take up a hefty percentage of the 32 meg cart.

The two-player mode allows player two to select any robot, but not player one...

...who is stuck with the dull blue cyborg. Dull in colour as well as ability. What a tragedy.

RISE OF THE

Sometimes software houses neglect to send us games, like children with bad report cards. This is just such an occasion.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

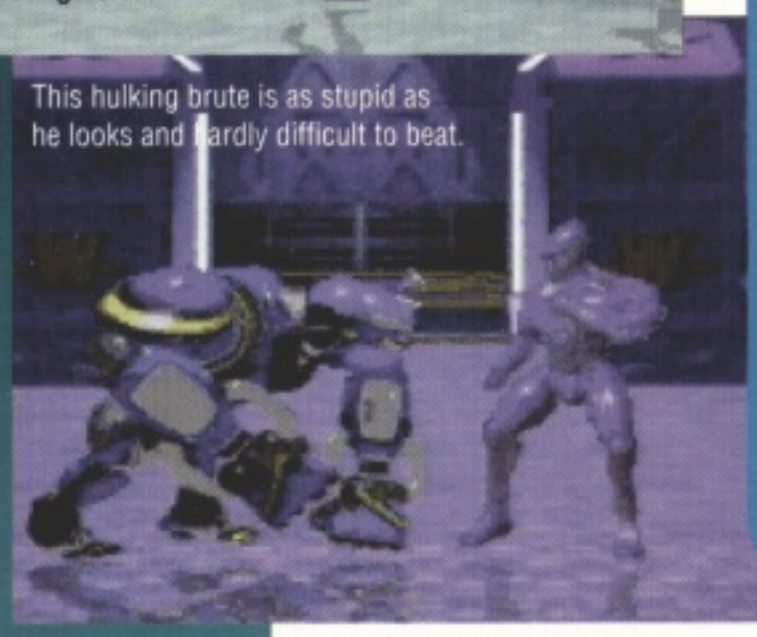
Mirage have been pushing *Rise Of The Robots* for what seems like decades now. Their supposedly world-beating and 'revolutionary' beat-'em-up has finally arrived, and without spoiling the suspense, it's a barrel of crap. Perhaps the worst example of everything bad about the software industry.

So much hype surrounds games these days, that it probably goes straight over most people's heads, but *Rise Of The Robots* has been difficult to ignore. Huge advertising campaigns, TV exposure and a notorious

UK Release

Game: Rise Of The Robots
Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Mirage
Price: £50 approx
Release: Out now
Players: 1-2
Cart ROM: 32 Mbit

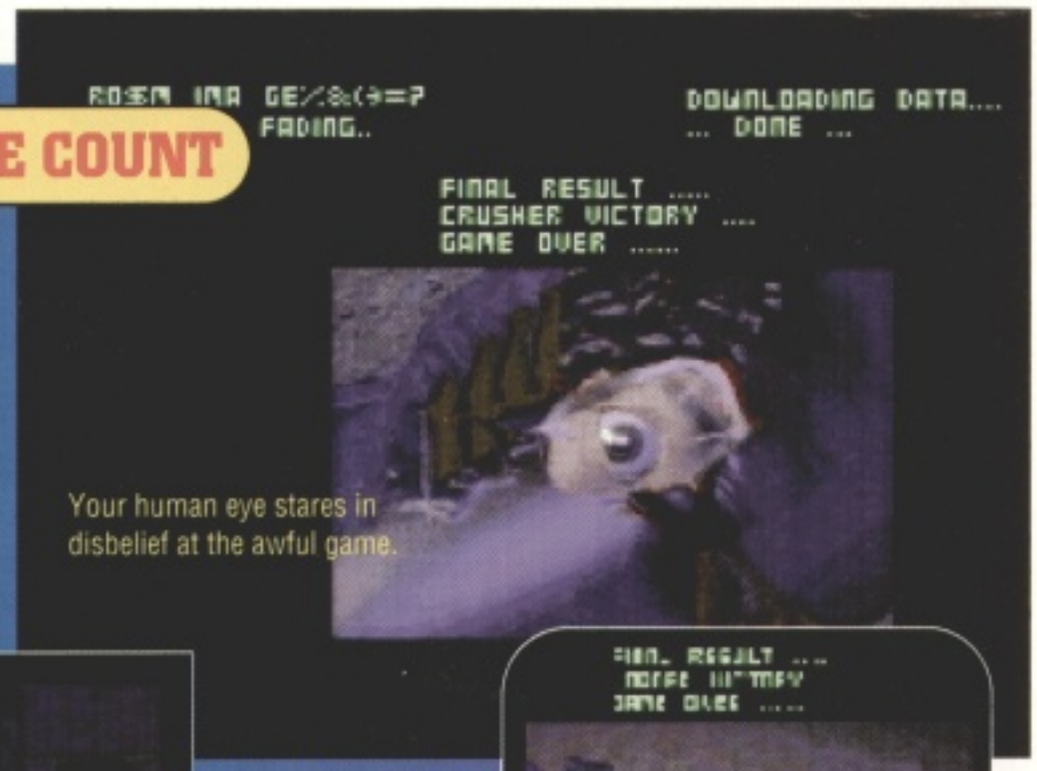
Your cyborg resorts to chasing after cowardly robot fighters.



This hulking brute is as stupid as he looks and hardly difficult to beat.

DOWN FOR THE COUNT

For the first time in video game history, being killed is more fun than playing the game. When you're beaten, an animation 'reveals' your secret, that you're half-human. Hardly secret, 'cos that's what cyborg means.



Your human eye stares in disbelief at the awful game.

You deliberately take a beating rather than playing on.

Death is the only release from tedium.

ROBOTS

poster campaign have embedded the image of the blue droid in everyone's mind. Take time now to clear that image out, because you won't be needing it any more.

The 'game' would be better described as a vaguely interactive demonstration of how rendered graphics can be converted into poor sprites. That's what this game is all about. The supposedly revolutionary graphics use a technique that's been around for ten years and isn't difficult to do. Draw some 3D objects, render them, and convert them into SNES compatible bitmapped sprites. Hmm, but what have we forgotten?

Oh yes, gameplay. Darn it, I knew there was something missing. Absolutely no effort has been spent in making *Rise Of The Robots* a playable or enjoyable experience. The animation is pretty diabolical and simply highlights the lack of response from the fighters and the awful lack of moves for the characters.

Other notable flaws with include a small range of characters, the fact that player one can only control the blue cyborg (without a cheat) and a shockingly presumptuous control method that can't be redefined. *Rise Of The Robots* is 32 megs of utter pap. And if all wasn't bad enough, the soundtrack is by Brian May out of Queen and wearing clogs. He goes out with that Anita Dobson who was in *EastEnders* and he's got a perm. Says it all really.

● Frank O'Connor

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
62%	30%	20%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	33%
30%		

VERDICT: Easily the worst beat-'em-up ever made, a fact highlighted by the enormous and unjustified hype. Sad as it sounds, the SNES version is still the best version of the lot. Buying this would be a cataclysmically stupid thing to do.

BIG ROBOT FELLAS

Yes, the limited selection of characters in *Rise Of The Robots* may well excite people who work for Caterpillar and JCB, but video gameplayers are used to a bit more variety and a bit more imagination. For a start, they're all humanoid robots, which is hardly pushing the envelope in terms of new ideas. And they all have pretty much the same moves. Soft kick and punch, hard kick and punch. No throws and duff special moves. Wait a minute, where's that *Street Fighter* cart again?

LOADER

I'm a loader and I like to load things. Crates mostly, but sometimes loose fruit.

BUILDER

I started with Lego, but I've progressed to having a visible bum cleavage these days.

CRUSHER

Paper cups, Kinder Surprise Eggs, crisp packets. I'll crush anything me.

MILITARY

I like to march up and down the square mostly. And polishing things, like boots.

SENTRY

I've been stood in this same spot for eight hours, so don't even talk to me, right?

GAMEFREAK

SNES TECH & GAMING ANSWERS

By Tony Mott

In which *Super Play's* very own agony uncle damages his frontal lobes in an effort to answer your Qs...

From Adrian Whiteley, Wakefield, West Yorkshire:
Dear Gamefreak,

Q With this new 32-bit chip coming out for the SNES, wouldn't it be possible for a car game with *Ridge Racer* style graphics – with rendered cars and graphics – but on a smaller scale?

A I'm sure that the new chip will enable the SNES to throw around much more complex imagery than before, but even a scaled-down *Ridge Racer* variant will prove too much.

Q Most of my Blitz commands on *Final Fantasy III* don't seem to work. My pad works perfectly so could the game be faulty?

A I'll assume the obvious – that you're aware you have to attain a particular Blitz Attack before you can use it – and suggest that perhaps you're not

Those hoping for visuals approaching this quality from Nintendo's 32-bit chip are going to be disappointed.

executing the pad movement at the correct point. Follow the on-screen prompts when you're first called upon to use a Blitz and you'll be fine (God, I feel like Allan Brett sometimes).

Q Are you going to do a massive *Mario Kart* guide or is the game too old now?

A It's too old really. Anyway, I think the particular beauty of a game like *Super Mario Kart* is that you get better at it by continued play and not from someone telling you how it's done.

From W Bootland, Hexham, Northumberland:
Dear Gamefreak,

Q I got *Super Bomberman* for Christmas because I don't like *Super Bomberman 2*. I was wondering if *Bomberman 3* is coming out, with a level designer and loads of other stuff like power-ups, and maybe even characters with different skills?

A *Super Bomberman 3* will be released in Japan in April. It won't have a level design section but it'll feature stacks of other interesting bits and pieces.

Q In *Street Racer*, how big are the windows in four-player mode on a 17-21" television?

A I haven't got a ruler handy but I'd guess at around three inches.more. But don't worry about it; even on PAL TVs you shouldn't have any problems, really.

Q I already have *Mortal Kombat* so is it worth getting Mortal Kombat II?

A Yeah, if you like the way the first game plays.

Q When reading *Manga Mania* I noticed Wil's name in the contributors section. What does he do there?

A He produces the occasional cover and also writes the Megabyte page, a section covering video games on all formats. Yes, truly a chap of many talents (although the making of hot and tasty beverages, sadly, isn't among them), (*Hurmph! – Wil*).

From Philip Marchant, Swindon, Wiltshire:
Dear Gamefreak,

Q What happened to you? One minute you were in the magazine, the next you'd gone without so much as a goodbye!

A I'm now based deep in a top secret bunker in Alaska, working for the US government testing the effects of video games and MTV when piped directly into the cerebral cortex. It's good work if you can get it, really.

Q What happened to the Bitmap Brothers? Are they still working on *Speedball 3* on the SNES?

A As far as I know they didn't actually ever start on

***The King Of Fighters '94* on the Neo Geo: outside of the SFII series, the pinnacle of side-on beat-'em-ups.**

From Ben Wickenden, Selsdon, Surrey:
Dear Gamefreak,

Q Please could you tell me where on earth I can find *Ogre Battle?* I have searched both shop and mail order warehouses and found nothing.

A Forget about the Japanese version, as Enix is gearing up to release it in the States (see news item last issue). It'll turn up on import in sufficient number for you to track it down then.

Q What happened to *Energy Breaker?*

A After the initial hype in Japan, interest in the game appears to have dropped off over there. So don't hold your breath waiting for it to turn up in English-speaking format.

Q Is there any news on the English language version of *Final Fantasy V?* I mention this because you said in issue 22 that it was being translated under a different name.

A Square are keeping tight-lipped over *FFV* following its release of *FFIII*. I'd be surprised if a translation appears before the autumn, if at all.

Q I know this is a one off but do Sunsoft have any plans to release *Albert Odyssey* in an English translation?

A It's probably too old for consideration now. Besides, you're not really missing much – regardless of its reputation it pales against the likes of *FFIII*.

Despite its age, *Ogre Battle* is still a worthy little game.

Speedball 3 – it was merely 'daydreaming' on the part of Eric Mathews' (the Bitmaps' big cheese). At the time *Super Play* interviewed him, about two years ago, all that was missing was a publisher to kick off the project. Isn't the fact that no one's realised the potential and picked it up since then absolutely typical?

Q I've been playing *The King Of Fighters '94* and *Samurai Shodown II* on my friend's Neo Geo CD recently and was wondering if there's any chance of them coming out on the SNES?

A Well, first you have to bear in mind that the games you mention are two of the biggest to appear on the Neo Geo yet – *TKOF'94* weighs in at 196 megabits! Conversion will no doubt appear, though, albeit in optimised forms à la the recent *Samurai Shodown I*.

Q Now that the first batch of next generation consoles have become available in the UK is it worth getting one or waiting for the Ultra 64?

A I've played just about every game worth playing on all of the new formats and can honestly say that there isn't yet enough strong titles to make the machines appeal to the average guy on the street. So if that's you, wait for the Ultra 64.

Q What exactly is a Gamefreak?

A Someone who's spent far too much money on their 'hobby', probably.

From Nick Baldwin, Cawley, Oxford:
Dear Gamefreak,

Q Do you think *International Superstar Soccer* going to be any good?

A Yes, but sadly the over-the-top speech that appeared in the Japanese version will be lost in the UK version. I can't even begin to describe how much it helps the game's atmosphere when it's running with a manic, relentless voice-over covering the action as it happens on-screen!

Q Do you know anything at all about *MKIII*?

A Not many people do, as my learned colleagues on *GamesMaster* magazine have been running the exclusive work-in-progress reports. This is about the only time I'd recommend that you buy a magazine other than *Super Play*.

Q Do you like my piccy of Baraka?

A Er, yes, although I thought that the inclusion of a decapitated Mario illustrated rather disturbing tendencies in you.

From Peter Lee, Erdginton, Birmingham:
Dear Gamefreak,

Q Could tell me how to convert UK PAL machines to 60 MHz because I've been quoted a lot of money which I can't afford.

A And still the interest in 50-60MHz conversion rolls on. Well, I couldn't tell you exactly how right here as my days as a soldering iron maestro are long gone, but you *could* try getting in touch with Advance on (0171) 439 1185. However, I wouldn't get your hopes up, and I must stress that the risks involved in DIY of this type are rather large!

From Duncan Snape, Woodbridge, Suffolk:
Dear Gamefreak,

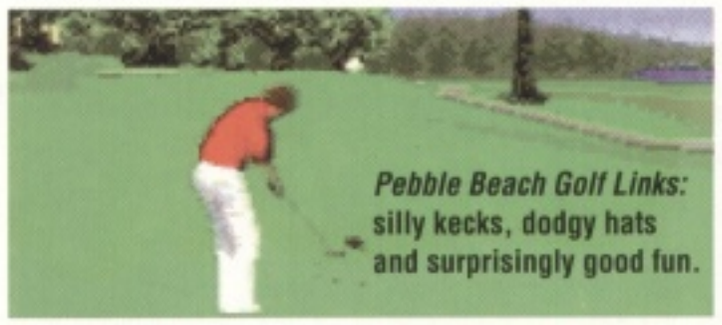
Q I know *Super Play* doesn't rate *Kevin Keegan's Player Manager* very highly, but I enjoyed it even though it is very limited – there is no European competition. Are there any more *Player Manager* games in the pipeline?

A I've spoken to Imagineer and they said that no further titles are planned as yet.

Q Can you tell me what is the best golf game available, or if any others are due shortly?

A Golf seems to have died a death on the SNES. Out of the existing titles you can't go far wrong with *Pebble Beach Golf Links* which should be available quite cheaply by now.

Q What game should I get next out of the following:



Pebble Beach Golf Links: **silly kecks, dodgy hats and surprisingly good fun.**

Tiny Toon Adventures: Wild And Wacky Sports, Turn And Burn, Yogi Bear, The Smurfs or *An American Tail: Fieval Goes West?*

A Bloody heck , what a choice. Both *Smurfs* and *Fieval* are pretty good platformers, *Turn And Burn* is the best air combat sim available, *Yogi's* a bit pump and *Tiny Toon's* pretty crap if you rarely play with lots of other players. So, *The Smurfs,* I s'pose.

From John Rogan, Durum:
Dear Gamefreak,

Q I bought *Cybernator* and I thought it was crap. It's only got seven levels and no passwords or saves. Why did you give it 91%?

A I don't know why – why doesn't everyone like the same music? Or the same food? Honestly. Seriously, though, how can you deny *Cybernator* its playability or fab mecha graphics? It's still a top game in my book.

ANY QUESTIONS?

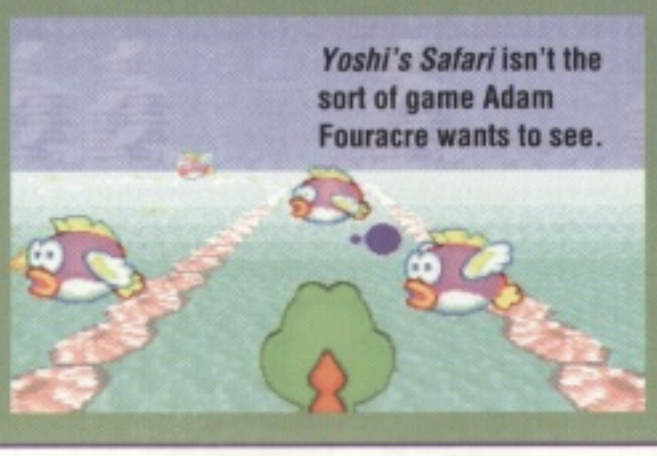
Well, not *any* – we're going to have to draw the line at gaming advice requests. Otherwise, send 'em to: Gamefreak, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

DAYDREAMING

I returned to my bunker compartment following the Christmas break to find it packed almost ceiling high with your daydreams. It seems that BBC's telly line up didn't provide quite enough entertainment (Mmmm, 70-odd quid for a TV license, that's value for money Mr Yentob), and lots of you busied yourselves instead with the following efforts. Take it away **Adam Fouracre from out of Tunbridge Wells:**

'My daydream would be for a game that encouraged you get the Super Scope off your shoulder and under it instead. There would have to be no ammo restrictions so you could just pepper the screen willy-nilly. Something mega violent like that coin-op with Aerosmith in it would be good, with buckets of blood flying around now that Nintendo have relaxed their policies. Or failing that, how about something like that old Master System game *Rescue Mission?* The good thing about it was that it was different to things like *Yoshi's Safari* and all the other Nintendo failures.'

Yeah, I'm sure that the six other Super Scope owners out there share your fantasies. The problem with light gun systems are the games themselves. Unless you try to marry straight target-shooting action with something else – which *Rescue Mission* tried to – you get a game that won't last very long. I can't see many more games being produced for the SS, sadly. Next up is **Mike Mitchell of Yate, Bristol:**



Yoshi's Safari **isn't the sort of game Adam Fouracre wants to see.**

'I've always loved the Atari's *720°* so I'd love to see a 'Super' version on the SNES. Although the graphics wouldn't be quite as high-res, I'm sure the gameplay could be just as good if not better.'

Yeah, along with *Paperboy, 720°* was exactly the sort of game that demonstrated Atari's coin-op excellence in the mid to late '80s. It's such a shame they've lost their way since then. I like the idea, incidentally, but I reckon anyone trying to play on a pad and not a stick would be stuffed from the outset. Games that appeal only to owners with non-standard kit (Super Scopes, mice and even sticks) won't get much support among software publishers – another sad difference between the world of console and computer games. **Darren Sachs of Aberdeen** has the next dream:

'Your feature on the rebirth of the SNES CD-ROM unit got me thinking about lots of daydreams. Surely a compilation of the classic Epyx Games series would be possible on such a system. *California Games* has been out on the Master System for ages so there must be people still interested in the genre. Just imagine, *Summer Games I* and *II*, *Winter Games, World Games* and *California Games* all on one CD. They could even shove some bonus events in here and there, and the graphics and everything would obviously be better than they were on the Commodore 64'.

Ah, happy memories of returning from the pub to play such titles with six or so friends come flooding back… Have a genuine, pristine, limited-edition *Super Play* T-shirt for bringing a tear to me eye, sir. Now, arise **Simon Walters of the place what they do call West London** and tell us you SNES game-related wishes:

'Something like a cross between *The Lost Vikings* and *Zelda* would be good. The sort of puzzles in *Zelda* are much better than those in *Vikings* and tackling them using a team of adventurers would make them much more fun. I thought that *The Secret Of Mana* was going to be like this but I was disappointed.'

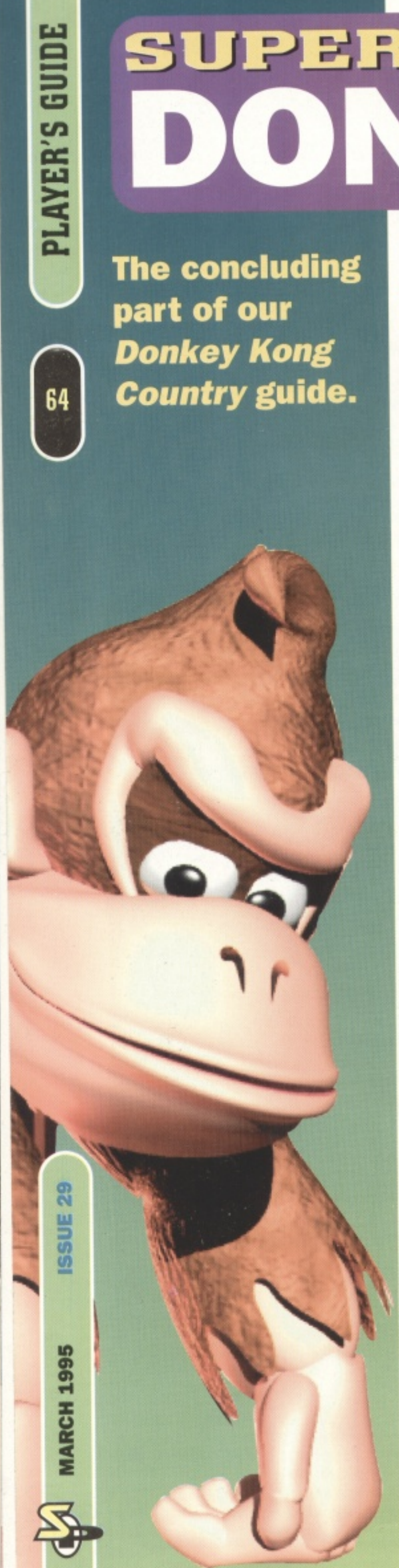
Well, we've always said that Mana doesn't really play like *Zelda*. I hear what you're saying, though – a two or three character *Zelda* would be fantastic. Perhaps *Zelda V* will deliver… Last of all to let us into his head is **Admiral Graf from Southend, Essex:**

'Why doesn't someone produce an adaptor so that you could convert a joypad socket into phono inputs, along with some cool software to translate music into weird patterns and shapes on the screen. Sometimes I play games with Mode 7 for ages and it has a quite hypnotic, trancey effect on me. I know I'd buy something like this.'

Er, right. Recreational pharmaceuticals have a lot to answer for. Anyway, keep those daydreams rolling in, and remember that there's a top T-shirt in it for the one that impresses me most each month.

SUPER PLAYER'S GUIDE
DONKEY KONG

The concluding part of our *Donkey Kong Country* guide.



AREA 4: GORILLA GLACIER

Snow Barrel Blast!

Straight away, jump up on top of the igloo entrance and bounce on the on-coming vulture to reach a cannon barrel/Bonus Stage hidden just off the top of the screen. When you return, head right and bounce up the line of three vultures to reach a 1up (extra life) balloon. Continue right until you get to the half-way barrel, at which point you should head back left, past the Krusha and drop down the next gap you come to for another hidden cannon barrel leading to a Bonus Stage. When you come back head right, past the tough bit with all the vultures, until you reach a spinning cannon barrel with three bananas and a hovering wasp just down to the right. Blast out of this barrel vertically downwards and hop right for another cannon barrel/Bonus Stage. Coming back to the main level, careful timing is needed to snatch the Rambi token from between two Wasps, before moving on to the right until you reach the last cannon barrel section of the level. This could well be the trickiest part of the entire game, if it weren't for a particularly sneaky short cut. Bounce on the vulture to get inside the first barrel, blast right into the second one, blast down and right into the third barrel (its a low one) and from here blast vertically down off screen for a secret network of barrels that will take you to the end of the level. True gamers, however, should bypass this for a real test of their mettle. Patience is the key.

Slipslide Ride

Oh joy! Oh happiness! Ice level Nirvana! Lure the hopping Kritter left at the start of the stage, bounce on him, grab the blue 'Auto' rope (Red = down, Blue = up), get off at the top left and use the barrel to break the wall directly left for a Bonus Stage. On completing that, jump down and continue right until you reach the first red rope. Halfway down that, jump off right onto the platform, grab the barrel, jump back left over the Wasp (taking care not to break the barrel and throw it into the wall at the bottom left of the rope for yet another Bonus Stage. Continue on until you reach the halfway barrel and just up from there (after using the cannon barrel) you must bounce on another Kritter to catch another blue rope which takes you to some bananas and an 'O'. Remember to break the ground underneath the rope on the way down for an Enguarde token. Next, jump onto the series of blue ropes on your right, and on the last one (just before the vulture) climb up above the Wasp on the rope before, and jump left onto that rope to reach a cannon barrel/Bonus Stage. Returning from that you are blasted up on to a terrace with two vertical ropes to choose from. Dodge the wasps and take the right one for mucho bonuses.

Ice Age Valley

At the start of this level kill the mini-vulture on your left, open the DK barrel and take a big running jump left (into space) to find a secret area with Expresso, some bananas and a 'K'. Continue right past the second swinging vine, and bounce on the high line of vultures on your right to reach a platform with a cannon barrel/Bonus Stage. Then, past the halfway marker, do a running jump/fly with Expresso off the hilltop with the steel keg underneath it (you can see the keg) to reach a high platform with an 'N' and a cannon barrel/Bonus Stage.

Croctopus Chase

Remember to press DOWN on the D-pad to sink faster. When you reach the area where you are blasted downwards by cannon barrels, swim right through a false wall after the second set of barrels to double back and collect the 'O'. Then, quite a bit past the halfway barrel, you can cross over a vertical passageway and head round in a square to collect a Winky token. Further on, you are chased a great length down/leftward by a Croctopus. Just above right of the nook where the Croctopus ends there is another false

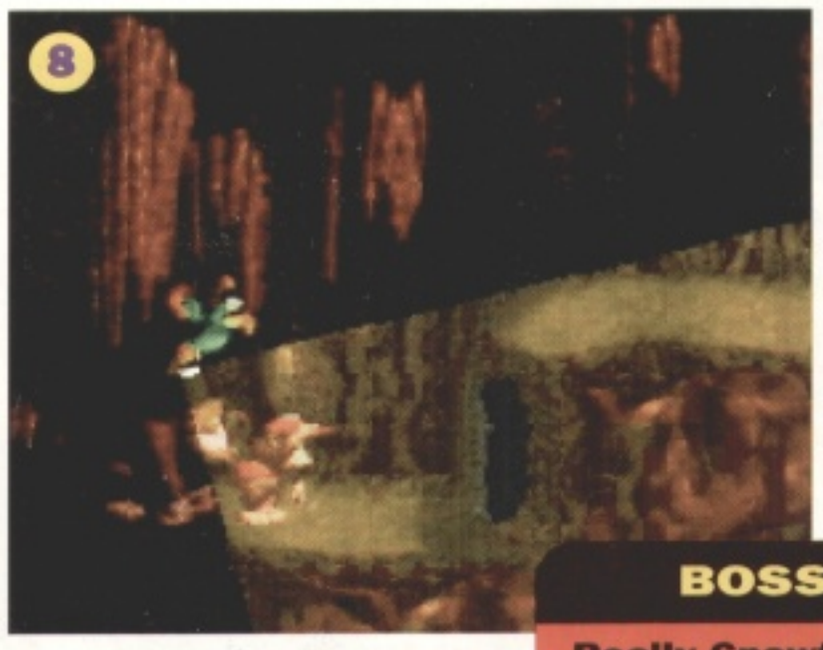
Jap/US/UK • Nintendo • By Dan Jevons

COUNTRY

wall to an Enguarde token and some bananas. Continue on and at the top left of the Croctopus chase past the one where you collect the 'N' there is another false wall leading left to a 1up (extra life) balloon and Enguarde, who'll make the rest of the level a whole lot easier.

Torchlight Trouble

One of those few levels where its better to be Donkey Kong. Right away pop the crate on your right to find



Squawks the parrot. Then continue on past the halfway barrel until you come to a normal barrel. Use it to break the rock face directly below for a Bonus Stage. Keep moving until you reach the next barrel, which is on top of the cliff face right at the end of the level. Pick it up, jump down over spiked cartwheel and use it to break the left wall directly over the exit sign for another bonus stage.

Rope Bridge Rumble!

There's a CK barrel just left of the start should you need it. Also near the start you can drop down the gap between the second and third tyre you come across (one's high left, the other is low right) to be blasted to a bonus stage containing Winky. Use

Winky to kill the Wasps and cartwheel jump to collect the precariously positioned letters. Then, near the end of the level, bounce on a moving tyre platform to reach a single banana at the top of the screen, which is in fact just beneath a hidden cannon barrel/Bonus Stage.

BOSS 4

Really Gnawty Rampage

Gnawty's back hopping left and right. This time, when you bop him on the head, he'll take a high jump towards you. Stand close to him after you've hit him to avoid this. The second hit produces two high jumps before he returns to his horizontal hopping, the third three high jumps and so on.

AREA 5: KREMKROC INDUSTRIES INC

Oil Drum Valley

Use the platform on the right to reach the moving rope then drop down onto the black spot to reveal a TNT barrel. Throw this at the first flaming oil barrel you

come to and drop down the gap it leaves for a cannon barrel/Bonus Stage. Keep moving right until you reach another black spot which should be bounced on to reveal another TNT barrel. Break the wall directly left of it for a Bonus Stage. After that you should find a cannon

barrel that will fire you up a large wall face; make sure you land on the black spot concealing a tyre. Push the tyre along with you to reach the 'O' and some bananas. Then, fall down the first gap you come to after the halfway barrel to find Rambi! Continue right riding him, and a little way on you should find a breakable wall beneath an oil drum floating in mid air, leading to another Bonus Stage. Also, learn the patterns of the oil drums near the end of the stage to make life easy.

Trick Track Trek!

Things are getting a little trickier now. Best to be Diddy here. Just as the first moving platform reaches its end as it's about to fall off screen (past the two mini-vultures) perform a cartwheel jump to the right underneath the platform you're supposed to get on, to reach the concealed cannon barrel/Bonus Stage. Then on the second moving platform, just past the first wasp you encounter, you must make a running jump for the high platform with the two mini-gnawties to reach another cannon barrel/Bonus Stage. Finally, when you reach the exit, take out the Manky Kong and fall right off the lower platform for a Winky token and another cannon barrel. Bonus Stage.

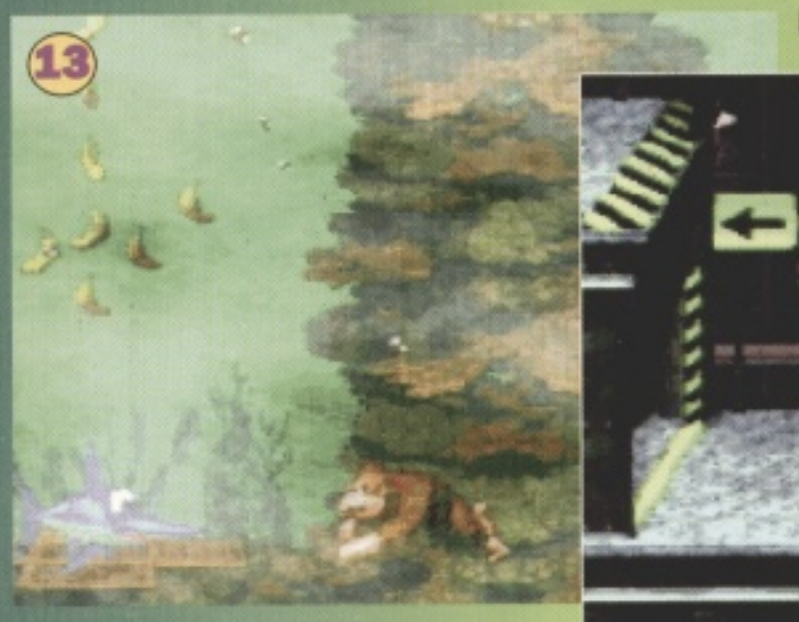
Elevator Antics

There is a Bonus Stage just up right of where you begin, which can be reached by either jumping right off the ledge you start on, or jumping left from the top of the first rope you come across. Continue right until you reach the section with three ropes covered by three wasps and jump up right off the top of the third rope (the one on the furthest right) to find another Bonus Stage. This should take you directly to the halfway barrel. Head on right and drop down in between the

first set of black elevator platforms you reach. You'll get a bunch of bananas. Then drop down left at the second set for the letter 'N'. Finally stay on the very last descending elevator of the level and hop off right, below the exit for the last Bonus Stage.

Poison Pond

13 Down left of where you start is a false wall leading to a secret area containing Enguarde and some bananas. Directly above where you



start is the level's 'K'. Past the halfway barrel, in the room with the first set of three spinning spiked tyres you come to, there is a fake wall in the railing leading to a Rambi token. Then, in the room with the second set of spinning spiked tyres, there is another false wall, this time on the left of the chamber, that will cut out a large chunk of the level.

Mine Cart Madness

14 Just past the 'K' you can jump out of your mine cart and grab a rope leading to a higher track. As you travel along this look for a break in the

banana trail and jump off the top of the screen at this point to reach a hidden cannon barrel/Bonus Stage. When you return, bounce on the vultures to reach the 'O' and then drop 15 down the next gap your mine cart encounters. As you fall down the normal track you will come to a second lower mine cart and track. Jump into this to collect a second hidden Enguarde token. Further on,

past the halfway barrel, there is an opportunity to jump onto a high-up tyre which leads you to another cannon barrel/Bonus Stage. Finally, after you disembark from the last mine cart onto the final platform leading to the exit, jump back left through the rails to reach a series of tyres leading to the level's last cannon barrel/Bonus Stage.

Blackout Basement

Once again, patience is the key to this tricky stage. Toward the end of the level, you will have to jump across a number of descending platforms (boards with white arrows pointing down). Stay on the last one (with a single banana beneath it) to fall into a cannon barrel/Bonus Stage. Finally, 16 carry the Steel Keg you come across right the way to the end of the level, to smash the wall face directly opposite the exit for another Bonus Stage.

BOSS 5

Dum Drum

Avoid Dumb Drum when he falls to the ground by waiting till his head appears at the top of the screen and then running either left or right. Bounce on the baddies he tips out on top of you (one left, one right) and repeat till he gives up. Best to be Donkey Kong here.

AREA 6: CHIMP CAVERNS

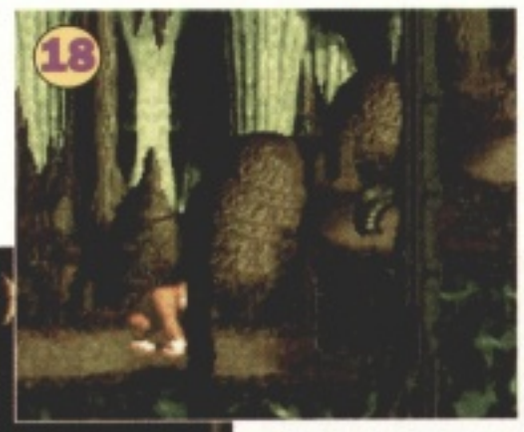
Tanked Up Trouble!

Things are getting pretty tough now. Though most of what you have to do is obvious, it's sometimes difficult to do

it. Needless to say, you have to collect all the fuel cans to keep the platform moving. And you can't change character once on the platform, so make sure you select Diddy. At the end of the first platform ride, when there is no more rail to go on, stay a little 17 longer as it goes up and around to collect and Enguarde token. And, likewise with the second platform ride, ignore the final cannon barrel and stay on to reach the 'G'.

Manic Mincers

Head right, get on Rambi and keep moving until you reach the first plain barrel of the level. Drop down into the U shaped dip just to the right of it, and break the wall on the right for a Bonus Stage (or you can use Rambi if you've still got him). Head on till you reach a fortress-like structure near the end of the level, and enter the door for some 'bananas and a 'G'. Then, when you re-emerge, either jump left off the top of the structure for a Winky token or pick up the TNT barrel, take a running jump



right off the ledge with it and smash the next wall you 18 come to (beneath the tyre) for a Bonus Stage.

Misty Mine!

Near the start, carry a TNT barrel over some toxic canisters to explode the one in the V-shaped dip 19 and drop down to collect the Rambi token. Then, on the moving rope just past the halfway barrel, climb

down as it moves right to find a hidden door leading to a Bonus Stage containing all the level's letters and Expresso. Further on 20 you can carry a barrel right to a small U shaped dip to break the face on the right for another Bonus Stage.

Loopy Lights

The little crocodiles here are a real pain in the neck, as they jump whenever you jump. So you've got to 21 jump high to kill them. Fall down the first gap you come across for

a cannon barrel/Bonus Stage. Keep moving, past the halfway barrel from the top of the hill past the steps (it's just underneath the vulture) down the other side and right across the gap to break the next wall face you come to for a Bonus Stage (Watch out for the Klap Trap).

Platform Perils

The grey Krushas must be killed with barrels on this stage, especially in the final section. You can reach the

cannon barrel/Bonus Stage just beneath where you start by jumping off the first 22 directional platform (with the white arrow pointing right) and landing directly below it. You'll land on a secret moving platform that will take you to the cannon barrel. Then, continue right till you reach the sinking platform with a vulture on your right. Sink down with the platform and jump

off right onto a hidden network of platforms 23 leading to a Winky token. Finally, sink down with the last platform of the level to jump off right and reach a final hidden cannon barrel/Bonus Stage.

BOSS 6

Necky's Revenge

Necky the vulture makes his return, attacking in almost exactly the same fashion as before. Only this time he fires out more coconuts and you have to wait for him to finish spitting them out before you can bounce on him.

FINAL BOSS

AREA 7
GANG PLANK GALLEON

The final boss. The main man. The big enchilada. And here's how to beat him. Wait until he throws his crown at you, jump over it and bop him one on the head. Then jump out of the way as he charges at you. Repeat this procedure, bearing in mind that the second time you hit him, he'll charge twice, and the third time thrice. Next he'll attack with falling cannon balls. The trick to avoiding this is to stand as close to one as possible the moment it hits the deck, then perform a short jump over it, putting yourself in a good position to jump over K Rool's crown and bop him when he thrown it. Repeat this procedure a further three times and the credits will roll. But will the game be over?

There you go. 100% of *Donkey Kong Country's* secrets. But can you complete the game with one life in under an hour? That is the task Cranky's set you. And guess what he does if you manage to pull it off...

MODE 7

By Allan Brett

CALLING ALL CHEATS, CRACKERS, AND GAME-FREAKS!

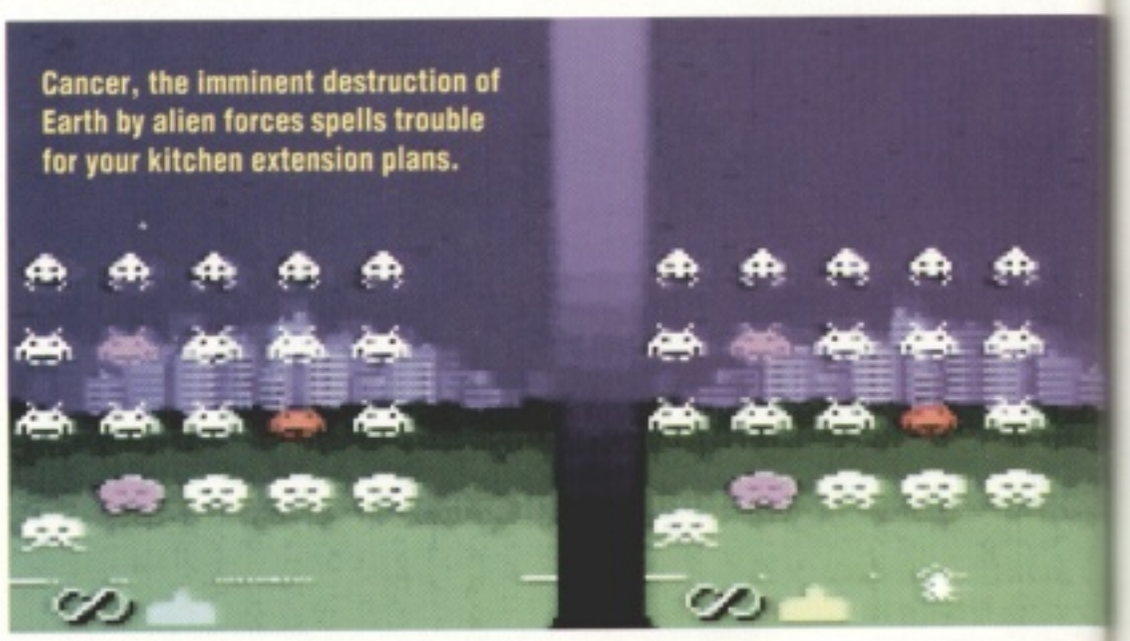
This month Mode 7 sees some big, big blockbuster games being tipped in profusion – no prizes for guessing what you lucky readers received this Christmas, eh? Still, there's nothing like a good holiday to start those listless hands waggling away at the joypad in the hope of finding something out of the ordinary. Have you, in your abstract travels through SNESdom, found some hint, tip, cheat or hidden bonus that the world needs to know? Then use it to increase your fame and prowess, not to mention your collection of cheap pens, by sending it to me at Mode 7, *Super Play*, Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.

STREET RACER

(Ubisoft) *SP*25: 91%

- **Four hidden tracks**

Good game, but shame about the ads, eh? Never mind, because Denis Attewell can take our minds off these mundane matters with his transcendent tracks cheat, which accesses an extra four courses hidden in those four well-used megabits. Go to the options screen and enter Custom Cup. Now press L, R, L, R, X, Y and scroll through the tracks. You should see that quad of bonus courses appended to the list. What's more, the list is permanently enlarged: you can now exit the options and race on these courses in practice mode as well. Excellent tip, Denis, but why did you forget to include your address?



SPACE INVADERS

(Nintendo) *SP*21: 40%

- **Original Arcade glitch**

Dropping into the office last month to tell us the latest gossip, erstwhile *Amiga Power* editor Stuart Campbell had a nostalgic bash on *Super Space Invaders* and noticed that one of the glitches on the original arcade game had been retained in its inglorious fullness. Here's how to get it.

As you blast away at the wave of alien ships, single out an invader on the very lowest row and avoid hitting it. When you get down to just one column of invaders you'll need to time your shots so that the aliens above your chosen one scuttle sideways into the bullets. When only one invader from the bottom row remains it will zip from side to side leaving a trail of sprite bits – alien mandibles or something, we guess – in its wake. Authentic, no?

Okay, so it may not take your breath away, but it meant a great deal to us old hacks. We remember going down to the sports centre after school... pockets of 5p pieces and a melted finger of Fudge... Sigh. Tell that to kids today, they won't believe you.

ASK ALLAN

INVALUABLE MONTHLY GAMING ADVICE

You've all gone RPG mad this month. What's wrong? Can't I help you with some particularly nasty platform game bosses, or a hidden bonus level, or something normal?

DEAR ALLAN,
I've practically finished *Final Fantasy III* but I still haven't got anywhere with the Colosseum. Every time I face Chupon he sneezes me off the screen. Do I need to beat him? If so, how?
Martin Smith, Battersea
ALLAN SAYS:
As I understand, you don't have to tackle the Colosseum at all to finish the game. It is, however, quite possible to beat Chupon, who seems to have somewhere between 45,000 and 90,000 hit points. An American correspondent has defeated him twice using a high-level Locke equipped with a Genji Glove (thus holding a weapon in each hand), the Offering (four attacks with each weapon), plus Atma and Excalibur swords. Both times Locke magically 'stopped' Chupon on the first round and hit him twice afterwards for a total of sixteen hits. You need much patience and luck to get a result, though, because the computer takes control of your gladiator and isn't particularly bright with it. Other creatures beside Chupon can be battled at the Colosseum – try wagering some of the other items in your inventory and see who turns up.

DEAR ALLAN,
I've now finished *Final Fantasy III* (*oh God, another one – Allan*) but I feel as if I've missed an enormous amount of the game. To keep me going until your magazine does a playing guide, could you tell me if Shadow can be found in the World of Ruin?
T Burgess, Leeds
ALLAN SAYS:
I'm not absolutely sure, actually, but telepathic messages inform me that you have to choose 'Wait' before jumping onto the airship after the floating continent. Then you can find a wounded Shadow in the Veldt cave in the World of Ruin. He soon slips off again, so what you must do is wager Striker at the colosseum and beat the SrBehemoth that challenges you. Then Shadow will join you for good.

DEAR ALLAN,
I' m playing *Breath Of Fire* and I am stuck. I get to the town of Gramor and find that time has stopped there. One guy tells me to look in Tock, which I presume to be the nearby tower. However, I come to a maze on the third or fourth floor of that tower, and I can't get past it.
Geoff Kaung, Kowloon
ALLAN SAYS:
Trial and error should have seen you clear by now, as the maze is negotiable without any additional equipment or skills. The arrow tiles warp you two places in the

SUPER SF II

A tall dark neo-fascist heralds wedding bells for Librans like Ken from *SFII*...

(Capcom) *SP*23: 96%

- **Special ending with three stars**
- **Auto config with stick thingie**

Special Ending? Three Stars? Yew-Ming of South Harrow in Middlesex keeps it short and sweet. Go to the options screen and step down a star to difficulty level three. Start the game and play through without losing any matches (losing one round is okay) until you reach M Bison. Win the first round against Bison but lose the rest. Now go back to character select and and choose Bison. Defeat Bison and watch the end sequence! Can it really be so simple, we wonder?

.. but beware of dodgy frilly shirts.

Peter Brodie of Sydney, Australia has some pragmatic advice for owners of 'those new-fangled arcade power stick type thingies' that never seem to have their buttons configured like the arcade set-up. He suggests you simply enter the OPTIONS screen, highlight SET and press any of the six attack buttons. Your stick will now be configured automatically to the standard three up, three down arrangement. This works with all versions of *SFII* and saves much fiddling when you're itching for a scrap.

SUPER GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

(Capcom) *SP*2 85%

- **Weird music**

We asked for it and we got it, courtesy of Graciano Heke of Hamilton, New Zealand. Playing around with the Sound Test, Graciano discovered some odd music effects that are 'actually kind of spooky'. Move the cursor to Sound on the options screen and move up through the numbers until you reach 6B (where the tunes proper begin) or more. What you must do is initiate one of these tunes then, while it is playing, move the sound counter back down to 4B and press the R button. This alters the instrumental samples to a different configuration – not unlistenable, but rather odd nonetheless.

SECRET OF MANA

(Nintendo/Square) *SP*15 94%

- **Touch the mushroom**

Want to play that age-old childhood game, Hassle the Shopkeeper? Not a great piece of advice, this, but it amused the troubled mind of Exeter's Richard Melville so maybe it can amuse you too. Once you have visited the Mushroom King and listened to his words regarding Flammie, go to the Mushroom Inn in Matango Palace. Move to the extreme bottom right of the room and pull down and you will be able to walk around the 'outer blackness' of the room and enter the Shopkeeper's back door, placing you behind the counter with him!

It's worth keeping an eye out for other invisible paths. Hidden in Jema's home castle of Tasnica is a shop that can only be reached by finding a similar secret passage.

Aquarius: a business meeting will be jeopardised when you smear your face with ginseng.

direction indicated – just work your way around, making a note of where you've already been. Sometimes you might actually have to take a path that looks like you're doubling back on yourself, when in fact it places you on an adjacent but well-placed square. Then you can reach the steps opposite.

DEAR ALLAN,
I think your column is great, and it is usually the first thing I turn to when buying your magazine. However, you gave some wrong help to Chan Chu of London. The Red Hot Mirror in *Soulblazer* is actually found by talking to the Shy Bird in the Woods of Greenwood. The Shy Bird is released by killing the sunflames inside the Light Shrine with the Spirit Blade.

By the way, at 34 years of age, do you think I'm too old to be playing games like this?
Steve Homer, West Midlands

ALLAN SAYS:
No, you're not too old – these consoles are far too good to squander purely on minors. Then again, maybe it was senility that caused my memory lapse and subsequent dubious gaming advice. Thanks for helping out with the *Soulblazer* tip.

DEAR ALLAN,
After 'walking the seasons' on *Secret Of Mana* I have found a crystal orb blocking my way. I've tried casting all my magic on it (Undine and Gnome) but it just won't budge. What am I doing wrong?
Andy Jones, London
ALLAN SAYS:
You've walked the seasons wrongly if you've turned up at the crystal barrier, quite frankly; you wouldn't believe how many people get stuck here. From the Moogle Village go right (Spring) and up and you'll find a path leading to Summer. Go up again into Autumn, go left and up to find the entrance to Winter and then head down to the bottom left corner to exit to Spring again. A new exit at the top of the screen takes you into battle with a giant bird called a Springbeak to defeat. A new magic elemental called Sylphid will then be entrusted to you which should be used on the Crystal Orb.

DEAR ALLAN,
I am terribly stuck on *Super Metroid*. I have the Morphing Ball, Charging Beam, Bomb, Missile and Super Missile and I have no idea what to do or where to go now. Could you help me please, or give me some cheats.
Richard Miller, Renfrewshire
ALLAN SAYS:
Cheats? Cheats? When you've hardly started? There's no lightweight option here, and without seeing where you're stuck I can't really understand your problem, but you currently have enough equipment to open practically every door on the planet. If you take a look at our *Metroid* maps in issue 23 of *Super Play*, then allow me to direct your attention to the Jump Boots and Ice Beam in the top-left corner of Norfair, the Speed Booster in the top right of Norfair, and the Varia Suit at the far right area of Brinstar (after the boss). These are the items that will next open up further areas of Zebes for your exploration.

ONE FINAL WORD

Stuck on a game? Then I'll go out of my way to help you out. Send your queries to:

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:
Ask Allan, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street,

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

(Nintendo/Rare) *SP*26: 90%

- **An infinite number of monkeys**
- **Bonus level select**
- **Warp points**
- **Abort level**

I knew it wouldn't be long before the great ape starting dropping his banana skins on my treehouse of tips. Anyone who received this game for Christmas will, by now, have completed it and started combing its fibrous underbark for cheats, bugs and grubs: so here's the result of our first forage for the denizens of the Mode 7 jungle.

Need more lives to get through those tough, unforgiving one-shot sections? Then here's a cheat or two to max out your lives. They rely on the trick that eight successive *Mario*-style monster stomps, made without touching the ground, will earn you an extra life.

Head for the Chimp Caverns section and make your way to the second bad guy after the mid-point Contique barrel. There's a pit which holds the secret entrance to a sub-screen, and this sub-screen is patrolled by a blue Kremling. Using Diddy Kong, drop down onto the Kremling when he nears the wall and hold down B, or whatever your 'jump' button is. If you can keep Diddy trapped between the Kremling and the wall (you may need to press 'back' towards the wall to keep him there) you'll keep clocking up lives because, of course, Diddy Kong is unable to kill the Blue Kremlings. The lack of a time limit means this can be repeated indefinitely: the lives counter only displays up to 99 but it seems possible to have up to 255 lives.

A slightly harder way to earn spare primates also exists in Chimp Caverns (and other areas of the game). Go through the Misty Mine level until you come to a rope jump. Get on the moving rope and look for a barrel of snakes on the far side. Jump on a snake, then jump back on the rope: this way you're not considered to have touched the ground, even though you can take your time and even fit in a tea break. Every eighth snake means an extra life.

Want to play endless animal bonus levels? On the intro screen which shows Cranky Kong winding his gramophone, enter the combination down, Y, down, down, Y (D,Y,D,D,Y – Diddy, y'see?) and you'll warp straight to an anthropomorphic token-collecting spree. You can collect as many lives as you wish and, according to Chris Murphy of Manchester, when you return to the bonus level select screen simply pause with START then press SELECT to be whisked back to your previous saved game.

DYDDY isn't the only secret word to endow you with sweets and treats. On the save/erase game screen, highlight 'erase' and press B, A, R button, R button, A, L button (BARRAL – barrel, geddit?). Return to your saved game and you will have a respectable 50 lives.

Warp Points in *Donkey Kong Country?* Maybe so. Robin Joyce of Chester advises us to complete the first level of the game and progress to the second. Kill Donkey Kong so that only Diddy is left on the map screen, then head back along the map-screen's track towards the first level: at the halfway point, where the track turns, press START and you will be dropped part way through a further level. Complete that and the next and you will face the Bumble B Rumble boss. A victory here will take you to the first level of the snowy sections.

Scott Cockroft of Halifax seems to have found something similar, although he insists that his four secret warp points are activated by keeping L & R held whilst pressing B. You can use either Donkey or Diddy too, as long as you possess only one of them. Warp Points exist in Kongo Jungle part one: at the bend between Jungle Hijinx and Ropey Rampage. Warps to the middle of Orang Utan Gang, Vine Valley Level 3; second bend between Ropey Rampage and Reptile Rumble. Warps to the end of Ropey Rampage; third bend between Ropey Rampage and Reptile Rumble. Warps to the end of Orang Utan Gang, Vine Valley Level 3.

And in Kongo Jungle part two: at the bend between Coral Capers and Funky's Flights. Warps to the end of Orang Utan Gang, Vine Valley Level 3. Now that's odd, don't you think? But there may be more warps, so keep your eyes peeled.

Finally, if you accidentally go into a level you've already done and don't want to risk losing valuable lives, pause the game with START and press SELECT to return to map screen. Not a great tip, as Jeremy Cox of Bracknell admits, but useful to know. Other credits go to Danny Smith of London, Eric Mayes of Cork, Phil Stimpson of Peterborough, Stefan Charles of Dorset, Mark Griffin of Bromley and Ihtisham Azmal of Doncaster as the first adventurers to step from the verdant foliage with these tips.

RISE OF THE ROBOTS

(Nintendo) *SP*29: 33%

- **Pick the supervisor as player 2**

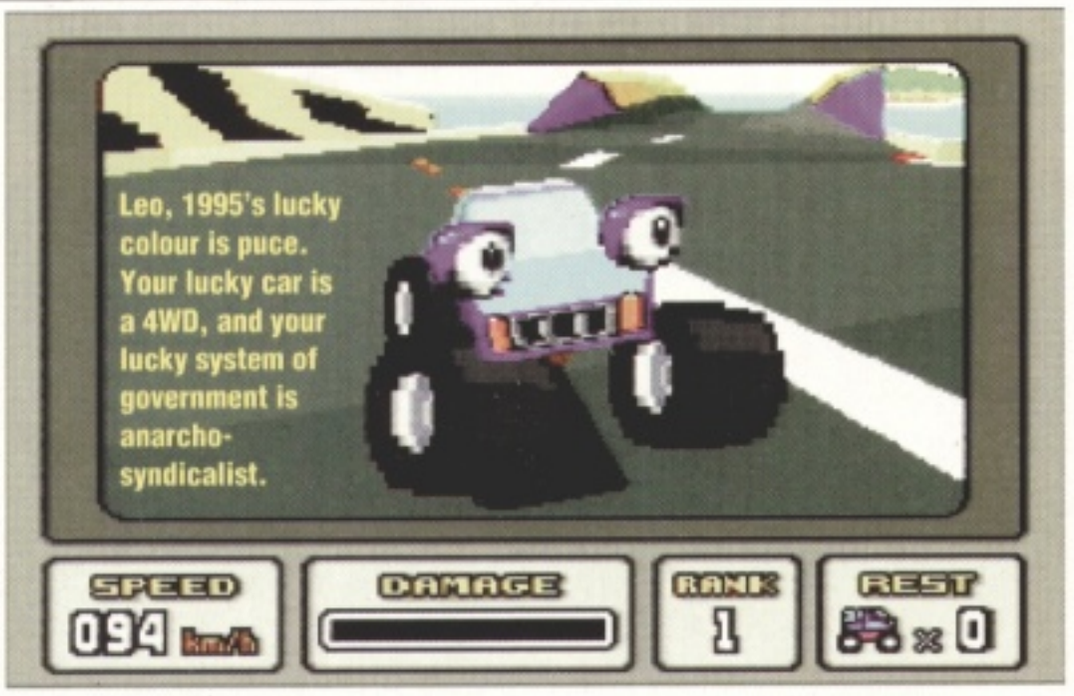
Enter the options screen and press up, right, down, left and any fire button on controller one. The enter a two player game. You will now be able to pick the Supervisor droid as player two's character. 'Now send me a pen or a copy of *Stunt Race FX*', writes Mark Fell of Leeds, expecting some remuneration for his *Rise Of The Robots* tip. Thanks for giving us the choice, Mark: your pen is on its way. (Well, would you pay fifty quid for one gaming tip? Thought not).

EARTHWORM JIM

(Virgin) *SP*29 91%

- **Level skip**

And what's this here? Alex Robinson of Chiswick tells us he's found a little cheat to skip through the levels of *Earthworm Jim* without a care in the world, saying 'Hello trees, hello flowers, hello sky etc.' and ignoring the nasty spikey platforms. Simply pause the game and press A, B, X, A, X+A, X+B, X+B, X+A before waiting a few seconds to be transported to the next level. Can't say fairer than that.



WILDTRAX

(Nintendo) *SP*22: 93%

- **Select your opponent's vehicles**

So, what are we driving nowadays? We actually mentioned this in the course of the review back in *SP*22, but so many have of you have sent it in as a discovered 'cheat' (it isn't, quite) that maybe more people out there need to be made aware of the option?

On any of the skill levels in *Speed Trax*, it's possible to choose the cars you race against. Select your own vehicle and then, before you hit START, press ELECT and use left and right on the D-Pad to alter what the computer racers will be driving. As our Tony pointed out, an entire race could be made up of 4WD vehicles, just like some odd US Monster Truck rally. Thanks (for not paying attention, I guess) go to Gareth Lee of Mansfield, Jonathan Cruickshank of Swindon and Richard Melville of Exeter. Happy now?

DROP US A LINE

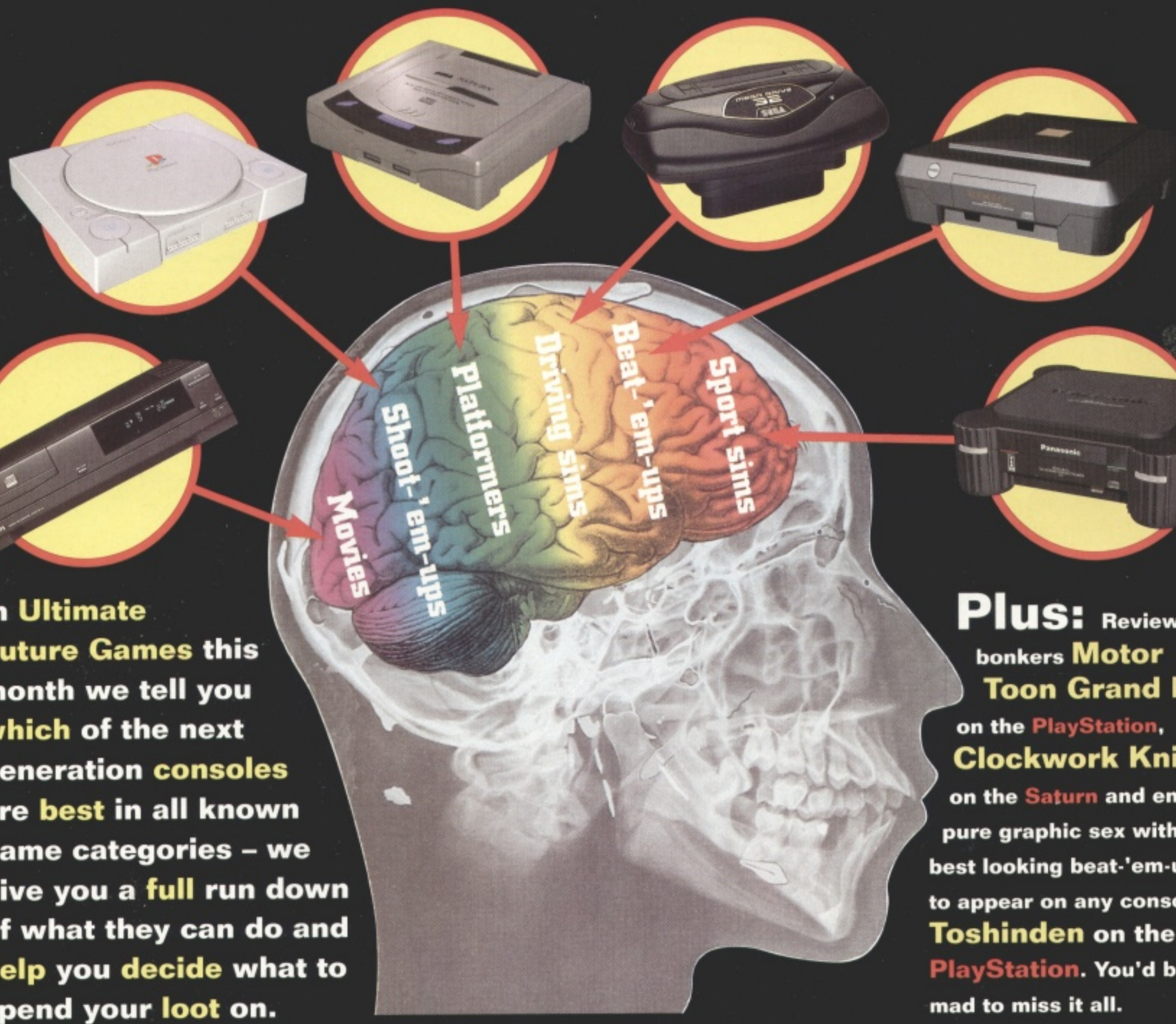
Want to see your name illuminated in the Shrine of Game Saints that is Mode 7? Then DON'T phone up the *Super Play* team. They're simple folk, unfamiliar with modern telecommunication devices, who hide in cupboards when that mysterious ringing starts. Instead, send your incense-tainted tips to me at: Mode 7, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.

HOLY END BIT!

If you have a burning hot cheat or code and want to see it, alongside your name, in the Hall of Fame that is Mode 7, DON'T phone up the *Super Play* Team. They are malicious, evil scoundrels and will laugh openly in your face. Instead, send your treasure to me at:

MODE 7, *SUPER PLAY*, FUTURE PUBLISHING, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH BA1 2BW

Blow your mind!



In Ultimate Future Games this month we tell you which of the next generation consoles are best in all known game categories – we give you a full run down of what they can do and help you decide what to spend your loot on.

Plus: Reviews of bonkers **Motor Toon Grand Prix** on the PlayStation, **Clockwork Knight** on the Saturn and enjoy pure graphic sex with the best looking beat-'em-up yet to appear on any console – **Toshinden** on the PlayStation. You'd be mad to miss it all.

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SUPER MARKET

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- Super DX-32m for sale with loads of games. A bargain at £450 (offers welcome). Call for list of games. Tel: (01302) 325100.
- UK Super NES, two joypads, five games including Sensible Soccer, Rock 'n' Roll Racing, about 20 issues of Super Play £130 ono. Tel:(01603) 716206.
- UK SNES for sale, eight months old. Everything boxed and in mint condition. Eight games including Street Fighter II, Zelda and Actraiser and stereo lead and adaptor for £200 ono. Tel:(01582) 565771.
- Neo Geo console for sale PAL version, two joysticks, memory card, World Heroes, Fatal Fury 2. All in excellent condition £350 ono. Tel:(0181) 959 7366.
- Neo Geo SCART for sale all in perfect condition, including two pads and 1-3 games, one definitely being Samurai Shodown. Will sell for £250. Tel: (01923) 285766.
- PC Engine Duo (Jap). Also American Turbografx. Both with extras and in mint condition. Also loads of top games to sell for £10-£20. Tel: (01532) 503291.
- PAL SNES with Super Street Fighter II and two great games. Game Boy with eight games and light magnifying glass and adaptor. £220. Tel: (01865) 714829.
- (UK) SNES, two pads, converter, eight top games including: Super SFII and MKII. All boxed in good condition plus over 60 magazines. Worth over £500. Offers open, preferably over £300. Tel: (01384) 824766 and ask for Dipak.
- SNES (Jap) SCART, Topfighter and Advantage joystick, F-Zero, Super Tennis, Starfox and SFII for sale and Philips 8833 MKII. Sell for £220 ono. Tel: (0181) 552 1934 and ask for Darren.
- SNES SFII, MK, MKII, Sim City, Bomberman, Madden '94, Zelda, Probotector, Smash TV, Batman, Striker, Multitap and loads of mags. Fully boxed as new. £350 ono. Tel: (01473) 716273 after 6pm.
- US SNES, 12 stunning games including Mana, MKII, NBA Jam, Madden' 94 complete with Multitap, three joypads, Action Replay 2, and converter. All immaculate. Essex area. Tel: (01376) 570155.
- UK SNES, three joypads, US/Jap converter, lots of magazines, eight games including Super SF II, Mortal Kombat II, Wildtrax, Fatal Fury Special and more. Worth £400. Will sell for £180. Excellent condition. Phone: (01892) 540322. Ask for Marcus.
- UK SNES, two controllers, a programmable joystick, 15 games all in excellent condition – £350. Call Tom on: (01442) 66062.
- UK SNES, two pads, Multitap, Pro Universal adaptor over 10 games including DKC, SOM, Street Racer, Lion King, Kick Off 3 and Vortex. Sell for £300 ono. Tel:(01250) 872321.
- UK SNES, 23 games, 3 pads, Action Replay and mags all boxed and worth £1,200. Will sell for £600 ono. Tel: (01582) 764207.

GAMES FOR SALE

- UK SNES, accessories, magazines and great games inc, SSFII, Mortal Kombat II, Wildtrax and more. All boxed. Mint condition. £200. Call Marcus on (01892) 540322.
- Super Nintendo Jap games for sale. Some animation titles available. Call: (0171) 2378596.
- SNES – Breath Of Fire (US) £35, Equinox (UK) £25, Striker (UK) £20, Plok! (US) £20, Ranma 1/2 (UK) £20, Madden '93 (UK) £15. All sent recorded delivery. Tel: (01702) 344422.
- 30 for Sega Game Gear. Games include JP, MK, Sonic II and Spy VS SPY. Will sell for £75 ono. Call Michael on (00 353) 7255222.
- For sale SFII (US) only £60, mint condition. Call Andy on: (01773) 825187 after 4pm.
- UK Super Bomberman £20, UK NBA JAM £30, Mystical Ninja £25, Mega Drive V Racing £35.00, SNES Super Tennis £20.00. Ask for Sarfraz when phoning. Tel: (0181) 672 5453.
- Hi! I've got Zombies (£25.), Alien 3, Pugsley's Scavanger Hunt (£20) + Mario World (£15) and a comp pro pad for just £6! Tel: (01883) 714777.
- Bomberman, FIFA Soccer, Rock 'n' Roll Racing, SFII, Starwing, joystick for sale. Call Steve on (01782) 305224.
- For Sale. US Final Fantasy III, boxed with instructions. Sell for £45 or swap for (US) Bomberman, Multitap and one extra joypad. Or (US) Super Metroid plus £10 on top. Tel (0181) 3161920.
- UK SNES games for sale: Rainbow Bell AOV £25, Super SWIV £20, Mario Allstars £20. All boxed with instructions and in good condition. Tel: (01604) 26209.
- SNES games for sale. Super Mario Allstars £20, Final Fight £10, Super Parodius and converter £15. BOB £10. Ask for Hansen on (0181) 6776320.
- UK games for sale. SFII £17, Super Tennis £17, Action Replay £24, all boxed with instructions. Sim City £12, Populous £13, boxed but no instructions. Tel (01473) 311384.
- Super NES games for sale. Goeman II (Jap) £30, Stunt Race FX (US) £30, SFII Turbo (US) £20, Super Probotector (UK) £10. Tel: (01932) 761556. Ask for Bill.
- Young Merlin, Flashback, Busby, Lost Vikings, Super Mario World, Super Probotector, Space Ace, Drakkhen, Prince Of Persia – all £10 each. Tel: (01287) 634857.
- UK SFII Turbo Ltd Edition £40 & Super Soccer £15. Tel: (0181) 7552129. After 5.30pm.
- SSFII (US), mint condition £40. Other games also for sale. Tel: (01295) 812055. After 6pm.
- For sale: Mortal Kombat II, NBA Jam £35, SFII Turbo, Stunt Race FX £25, Aguri Suzuki F1 £20. All UK boxed with instructions. Tel: (01485) 540108.
- Starwing £12, Super Tennis £17, and UN Squadron £18 all games boxed with instructions and in excellent condition. I also have many computer mags for sale (including Super Play). Tel: (0191) 2661878.
- Super SFII (US), Stunt Race FX £40 each. Slam Masters (US) £35 Rock 'n' Roll Racing £25. No offers. Tel: (01902) 604607.
- Stunt Race FX £35, Super Game Boy £30, NBA Jam £25, SN programmable joystick £20, Datel programmable Universal adaptor £20. All US versions, box and instructions, Good condition. Also Final Fight (US, no booklet) £10. Ring Tom: (0114) 2305130.
- SNES Bart's Nightmare (US) with compatible adaptor £20. Both boxed with instructions. Or swap for any (UK) Final Fighter game boxed with instructions. Tel: (01394) 385344 after 6pm.
- Super Star Wars (UK) £20, Pop 'n' Twinbee (UK) £20, Buster Busts Loose (US) £20, Axelay (US) £10, Starwing (UK) £20. All boxed and in excellent condition with instructions. Tel: (01224) 630625.
- PC Engine CD-ROM Titles. Y's 1+2 £14, JB Harold £12, Gate Of Thunder £14, Davis Cup Tennis £18, Beyond Shadowgate £23. Shinobi, Hit The Ice, Raiden Trad to swap, Devil Crash wanted. Tel: (0115) 9612713. After 6pm.
- Mario Allstars for £30, Mario World for £15, Plok! for £25 (new) SFII for £25. Tel: (01376) 571417.
- Bargains!! Either Super NES or Game Boy games for sale. Sunday or Mondays after 6pm. Tel: (01323) 833022.

- Games for sale: Another World £15, Super Soccer £10, WWF (US) £10, Wing Commander (US) £10. Allstars £15, Populous £15, Ghouls and Ghosts £20. Tel: (0181) 3862749.
- SFII Turbo (US) £30, Cybernator (UK) £25, Contra (US) £23, SFII (US) no box £20. All in excellent condition. Tel: (0115) 937 3200.
- PAL SNES games for sale, Mario Allstars £23, Mario World £15, Busby £23, Castlevania £10. All boxed with instructions. Tel: (01706) 877937.
- (UK) Games for sale (SNES) Super Mario Allstars 96% £25, Super Tennis 92% £25. Both four months old. Tell Henry on:(01252) 873320.
- SNES (UK) games for sale. Mario Allstars, two months old £25 with box and instructions, Super Tennis four months old £25 + box. Tel Henry on: (01252) 873320.
- Hi! I have loads of games for sale including Batman Returns etc. Phone: (01738) 623342 after 5pm and ask for Stuart.
- Cheap games for sale, for SNES and PC Engine, in excellent condition from £15-35. Ask for Andrew. Tel: (0181) 8826191.
- Game Boy for sale, okay condition, AC adaptor, Game Light + magnifier, six games inc. Mario 1 + 2, Lemmings, Double Dragon etc. No boxes, just game cases £50, buyer collects. Tel: (0181) 248 4041. Ask for Yan (Ealing area).224055.
- UK SNES games for sale: SFII – £18, Desert Strike – £15, Super Bomberman – £18, Super Putty – £15, Super Castlevania – £15. Phone Lee on: (01689) 874241.
- Would you like to buy Mr Nutz? Only £20.Call Gary on: (01392) 435367.
- Donkey Kong Country for sale. This 32 meg game comes with box and instructions and a free CD – all in mint condition for just £35. Call Edd on: (01428) 713615.
- SNES game Dragons Lair £15. Tel: (0181) 554 2913 between 6-8pm.
- Games for sale or swap. Street Racer £35 great condition two weeks old. Also, Batman returns £20 (Jap) with English text and adaptor, no box or instructions. Offers and swaps accepted/considered. Tel: (0181) 553 5144.
- Tiny Toons (US), F-Zero, Starwing, Mortal Kombat, all UK – £15. Alien$_3$ Mario Allstars, Shadowrun, Mr Nutz, Mega Man X, all UK – £20. All in good condition with box. Also Castlevania (US) and Mario World (UK) – £10 each. Tel: (01322) 66783.
- Mega Drive games: Shinobi III £20,Gaiares £15, Elemental Master £20, Streets Of Rage II £22, Thunder Force III £17, Herzogzwei £15. Tel: (01283) 812519.
- UK Bomberman – £25, UK NBA Jam – £30, UK Mario Allstars – £20, UK Mystical Ninja – £25, UK Rock 'n' Roll Racing – £25, US Scope – £10. Mega Drive Virtua Racing – £35. Ask for Asif when phoning. Tel: (0181) 672 7125.
- SNES games for sale. Kevin Keegan and Ghouls And Ghosts (both boxed) will swap for any good SNES games – £20 ono. Tel: (01292) 315275.
- UK SNES games (All boxed with instructions), Super Probotector, Mario Allstars, Zelda,Equinox, Legend Of Mystical Ninja, Another World, Addams Family. All £25 ono. Tel: (01973) 311537.
- For sale! John Madden Football '93 (US) £20 and Human Grand Prix (Jap) £15. Also, SNES games wanted. Tel: (01753) 547452 and ask for Tommy after 5pm.
- For sale: (US) Smash TV, (Jap) Star Wars, (UK) FIFA Soccer, Striker, Mortal Kombat, Exhaust Heat, NBA Jam, Zombies – all £25. Tel: (01582) 873565.
- Mortal Kombat II (UK) £35, SFII Turbo (US) £25, Datel Pro Action Replay £25 (All boxed with instructions). Super Mario Allstars (UK) £20 Tel: (0181) 647 647 8416.
- SNES (UK) games: Exhaust Heat £20, Lost Vikings £20, Mario World (unboxed) £12. All excellent condition. Phone: (01473) 822799.
- SNES games for sale: Turtles IV, Cybernator, John Madden's Football, Super Kick Off – £15 each. Tel: (0181) 859 3644.
- Super SFII (US) £40, Stunt Race FX £40, Rock 'n' Roll Racing £30, Slam Masters (US) £30, US/Jap converter £5 or free with SSFII. Tel: (01902) 604607.
- UK SNES games; Zombies, Metroid, Pac Attack, Mario World, Allstars, R-Type 3 – £25 each. Donkey Kong Country – £35. Phone Wayne on: (0121) 378 5553.
- F-Zero (UK) £10, Cybernator (US) £25, Tiny Toons (US) £25. All boxed with instructions. Tel: (01822) 840712 after 5pm and ask for Mark.
- Super Street Fighter II for Mega Drive in mint condition £37. SNES games; Super Aleste, Sim City and Striker all £18 each. Buyer collects. Phone: (012055) 330172.
- Syndicate for the Amiga £20, King's Quest VI £25. SNES games (US) Super Adventure Island £24. (UK) Super Game Boy – brand new unwanted gift £40. (US) Street Fighter II £18 (UK) Aladdin £29. Tel: (0181) 422 8779.
- King Arthur's World £9, Mystic Quest (US) £7. Game Boy games: Zelda VI, Monster Max, Mystic Quest £12 each. Mega Drive games: Fatal Labyrinth £7, Technoclash £9, Bubba 'n Stix £17. p+p inc. Tel: (01379) 740367.
- Mech Warrior £27, Super Metroid (US), Young Merlin £22 each, Chaos Engine, Alien$_3$, Mystical Ninja (US), Lagoon £17 each, Lost Vikings, 7th Saga (US) £12. p+p inc. Tel: (01379) 740367.
- Games for sale on the following machines: 3DO, SNES, Mega Drive, Saturn, PlayStation and PC, Neo Geo (CD). If interested give Darren a call on: (0181) 552 1934.
- Stunt Race FX and Secret Of Mana, both as new and £30 each. Desert Strike and Tiny Toons £15 each. All games US. Phone: (01908) 240 498.

SWAPS

- Swap my Sunset Riders (UK) for Battlemaniacs (UK) for Smash TV (US), Alien$_3$ (UK) or Super Bomberman (UK) or £20 each. Ask for Steve after 6.30pm weekdays on (01834) 842280.
- I will swap my Pitfighter for your Starwing or any other good game. I have Aladdin to swap too, for Mario Kart. Ask for Amar: (0121) 558 3135 call after 7pm
- Swap my Pugsley's Scavanger Hunt (UK) for your Turtles Tournament Fighters, Sensible Soccer or Stunt Race FX. All must be UK. Tel: (01244) 813229.
- Game Boy case, Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure, Konami Golf, Double Dragon and Hal Wrestling swap for Lagoon (US or UK). Ask for Nigel: (01274) 599819.
- Get rid of your Final Fantasy II. I'll relieve you of your burden and give you SFII (US). Tel: (0141) 647 8753.
- I will swap my T2 Arcade (UK) or Ryan Giggs (UK) for your Aero Areobat, Mr Nutz, Plok!, Axelay or a top fighter joystick. Tel: (01772) 716647 after 4pm weekdays.
- I will swap my Secret Of Mana (US), Flashback (UK), SF Turbo (UK) or Super Metroid (US) for Mortal Kombat II or any other good games. Tel: (01954) 718718.
- SNES games. Swap Game Boy games two for one. Possibly buy SNES games if cheap with box and instructions. Tel: (01323) 833022 Sunday or Monday eves.
- Hello! want to swap a SNES with plenty of games for a Jaguar with Alien vs Predator. Tel: (01733) 263714.
- Swapping US Zelda III Link to the past and helpful hints for either Flashback, Soulblazer or preferably Secret Of Mana. Tel: (0121) 3605015.
- I will swap Deadly Moves (US) for Genesis. For FIFA, Turtles T Fighter, Tiny Toons, Allstars, NBA Jam, Zombies, Ranma 1/2, Sonic III or Mutant League Basketball (US only). Tel: (01494) 522866.
- I will swap my Top Gear 1, Super Ghouls 'n' Ghosts, Ultraman, F-Zero, World Cup USA '94, PGA Tour Golf and Super Mario Paint for any decent SNES games. Tel: (01501) 740244.
- Axelay, Batman Returns, Kick Off, Ghouls 'n' Ghosts, Castlevania IV, Total Carnage, Jurassic Park. Want Alien$_3$, Actraiser etc. Any game considered. Tel: (01532) 717663.
- Swap my Starwing, NBA Jam or Tiny Toons (UK) for your Rock 'n' Roll Racing or Action Replay (must be UK). Tel: (01395) 516133. Ask for James.
- Swap/sell Prince Of Persia (Jap), Cybernator (US), Madden '94 (US), Desert Strike (UK), Zombies (UK) £20 each. I want Turtles IV, Probotector. Tel: (01869) 331591.
- SNES games wanting swaps. I want Micro Machines or Chaos Engines for World Class Rugby, Lemmings. Ask for Libby. I'll consider any other games. Tel: (Chester) 679395.
- Swap (Jap) Axelay for Sunset Riders, Pilotwings, Sim City, Lethal Enforcers, Cybernator, Sensi, Total Carnage, Bart's Nightmare, NBA Jam or Bomberman. US versions only please. Tel Paul on (01789) 488205.
- Swap Kick Off PAL version boxed with instructions for Mario Kart or sell for £20. Ring Ian on: (0181) 4012284.
- Super Star Wars, Strike Gunner (US), swap both for Action Replay with instructions. Buyer must collect. Tel: (01703) 619299.
- I will swap Bomberman or Prince Of Persia for Flashback or Another World. Must Collect. Tel: (01223) 573678.
- SNES games wanted to swap and buy. I have many top games. Anything considered. I am also willing to sell any of my games. Please tel: (0191) 526 8394.
- Mega swap! Swap Zombies (UK) + £5 + Pro Uniadaptor for Secret Of Mana (US). Must come and collect. Watford area. Ask for Karkay. Tel: (01923) 253756. between 4-9pm.
- Swap my Mortal Kombat, Batman Returns, SFII, NHLPA Hockey or Mickey's Magical Quest (All UK) for your Mario 3, SFII Turbo, Tournament Fighters, Cybernator or Desert Strike (must be UK). Tel: (01962) 880937.
- Game Gear with eight games + AC adaptor. Will swap for four SNES games or sell for £95. Any games considered. Tel: (0161) 4067747.
- I will swap my Game Gear with two games for Street Fighter II (US, UK or Jap). Phone Richard on: (01933) 316649.
- Swap my Cybernator and Mario Kart, both UK with instructions, for any UK games over 90% (No Mario games please). Tel: (01395) 275823 between 4-7pm.
- I would swap my UK Addams Family for UK Mario Kart. My number is: (01787) 477822 and ask for Harry.
- Swap Dragon Ball Z (Jap RPB), Pop 'n' Twinbee (UK), Aladdin (UK) for Secret Of Mana (US), Mario Kart (US or UK) or any decent games. Tel Chris on: (0181) 6887081 Mon-Fri after 6pm.
- For sale/swap Stunt Race FX (US), Sensi (UK), SFII (US), Action Replay, Super Tennis. Wanted: Secret Of Mana, Shadowrun or anything else that got 80% plus in Super Play. Tel: (01756) 701609. Ask for Owen.
- SNES Super Metroid (UK) and Starwing (UK). Sell for £25 and £10 or swap for Rock 'n' Roll Racing, Aladdin, Secret Of Mana, Stunt Race FX, Return Of Jedi. Tel: (01889) 582445.
- Japanese comics for sale or swap. Many are rare issues, such as Appleseed, Akira, Nausicaa and many many more, sorry no splits and must be willing to collect due to large number. £650 ono or swap for Neo Geo CD, PAL/ NTSC Laserdisc player or reasonable offer. No Famicoms! Tel: (0191) 274 1854.
- I'll swap Mortal Kombat, Kombat UK for Pilotwings or sell £35. Tel: (01302) 351944.
- I will swap any of the following for Super Star Wars or Super Empire Strikes Back, Another World, Populous, Allstars, Super Soccer, Ghouls & Ghosts, WWF (US), Wing Commander (US). Maybe two for one! Tel: (0181) 3862749.
- I have MKII (UK), Pilotwings (Jap), NCAA B.Ball (US). Will swap for your Rock 'n' Roll Racing, Bomberman II, John Madden '94, '95, NBA '95, Street Racer. Tel Tom on (0161) 7409247.
- Swap my Shadowrun (US) or Mystical Ninja (US) for Final Fantasy II or Soulblazer. Tel: (01223) 573004.(eves/weekends).
- I will swap you Super Tennis, NHLPA Hockey, Super Soccer and Stunt Race FX for MK, Mario Kart and Mickey's Mania. Tel: (Glasgow) 4298549.
- I will swap my US Joe and Mac and Super Soccer Champ for your UK Kevin Keegan, NHLPA '93, Populous, Pebble Beach, Pilotwings, Actraiser or Action Replay. Ring Michael after 5pm Mon on: (00 353) 7255222.
- Swap my Starwing, Bomberman, Castlevania IV or Equinox for UK/US Plok!, Contra III, Mario Kart or FIFA or swap any two for Street Racer or SSFII. Tel: (01343) 540829.
- Swap Breath Of Fire for Secret Of Mana. Swap any three from KKs Player Manager, Actraiser, Sim City, Goof Troop, R-Type (US), for Soulblazer. Call Les on: (01245) 472572.
- US SNES for sale with SFII and converter £60 or swap for PAL version, Super SFII (US) £35, Street Racer £30, Donkey Kong £35. Tel: (01422) 347004.

WANTED

- Wanted a Jap version of either Mario Kart, F1 Exhaust Heat II, Starfox, Stunt Race FX for a reasonable price. If you've got one or all ring: (0923) 285766.
- WANTED: Zelda 3, Secret Of Mana, Bomberman 2, Super SFII, Sim City, Rock 'n' Roll Racing, R-Type 3, Top Gear 2. Must be boxed with instructions. Will pay up to £20. Also Action Replay – two wanted, will pay £35. Phone Keith: (01495) 271076.
- Wanted on the Super NES, Final Fantasy II or Breath Of Fire (US) and issues 1 and 2 of Super Play. Call Scott after 5pm on: (01375) 374805.
- (UK) SFII – £5, (UK) Cool Spot – £15, (UK) Mortal Kombat – £15, (UK) Sim City – £15, (UK) Mario Kart – £20, (US) Lethal Enforcers – £45. Tel: (01448) 406575.
- WANTED: Final Fantasy, Legend 2 for the Game Boy. I will swap it for Zelda, Nascar and Tetris. If interested contact Richard on: (0117) 974 1392.
- SNES games for sale or swap. Game Boy games also wanted. Contact M Williams on: (01463) 711205.
- Oy! Have you got King Arthur's World? If so, great! I will swap for FIFA International Soccer, James Pond, Populous etc. All boxed. I will buy for £25 or less. (All UK versions) Call and ask for Andrew. Tel: (01706) 370992.
- WANTED: FIFA Soccer SNES game. I will pay £20 for it. Seller must deliver. Tel: Andrew (0114) 288 3930.
- WANTED: Samurai Shodown, Saturday Night Slam Masters, Ninja Warriors, Fatal Fury II (US if possible). Will swap for SFII Turbo (US), Mortal Kombat II (UK), Aladdin (UK) or maybe Super Street Fighter II (US). All games as new. Phone Clarky on: (01395) 578087.
- Issue 7 of Manga Mania. Must be in (near) mint condition. Will pay up to £10 depending on condition. Call: (0171) 355 5937 asap!
- Jap Super Famicom with all leads wanted. Will pay up to £80 with a good Jap SNES game. Jap SNES games also wanted. Will pay up to £25 for a good game. Jap Game Boy games also for sale including Ganbare Goeman – £15. Contact Chris on (01509 413528 after 7pm.

MESSAGES AND EVENTS

- I'm a 17-year-old Australian male who is into SNES games, sci-fi films, Red Dwarf and programming and I would like a pen-pal of similar age to write to. If you are interested write to: Quentin Graham Mail Service 2217, Oakwood Road, Bundaberg, Queensland, Australia 4670.
- Magazines for sale: NMS, CVG, TOTAL!, Super Play, GamesMaster, some old Mean Machines. Good condition. Phone for a full list. Tel: (0181) 443 4486.
- Will Andrei Gillot of Twickenham please contact me (or anyone who can tell me his address) Tel: Karl (0181) 367 1183 after 5pm.
- Freddo the frog downs the brine in one and Gordon Christie is a weiner.
- Jap anime cartoons for sale. Latest titles, wide selection. Ring Baz: (0956) 473223.
- Street Fighter II Turbo tournament being held in the East London area. For more details tel: (0181) 551 7949.
- Manga videos for sale £10 each. Tel (0181) 556 7498 Mon-Thurs and Sundays. Ask for Eddie. Issues 2-16 of TOTAL! worth approx £38. Will sell for £25 ono. Must collect or pay for delivery. Tel Danny on (01924) 406400.
- To Jan-Fei: Thanks for the card, I lost your address so can you please contact me. From Phil. Tel: (0181) 540 6881.

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EXCITABLE VIEWPOINT PLAY BACK

We've only printed scented letters. Some smell of Miss Dior, others of Ralph Lauren's Safari and yet more of Joop! (pour homme). But they reek of perfumery.

'IF THEY WERE MUCH BIGGER'

I am writing to give my views on the article in issue 27, concerning the SNES CD unit, and whether or not I would buy it in 1995.

The answer to this would be yes. But I think a number of changes in the console market would have to take place first. The main reason I would not buy a SNES CD at the moment is that there are too many machines to choose from. There are too many CD formats available, which are overpriced, lacking in software, and unconvincing. Because of this, there has not been a success story regarding one of these machines. I feel at the moment that cartridges dominate the market too much for the CD format to get a real look in. This has made the average person, including myself, not interested enough to actually buy hardware in this format. People are so used and happy with the cartridge format that they are unwilling to part with the cash to buy a CD machine.

For people to actually start buying into the CD market and especially the SNES CD this year, a quite rapid decrease in production and sale of cartridges would have to take place. This would take people off the idea of the 'cartridge' and onto the 'CD'. Gameplayers will become used to the CD in such a way that it will become *the* format.

Titles that I'd like to see appear on the unit wouldn't vary too much from what is on cartridge at the moment. Games like *Mario World* would be excellent if (using a CD's data storage) they were bigger Maybe *Street Fighter: The Next Generation,* which could include a wealth of options like a section for character design. Also the incorporation of moving video would be good. I'd like to see the titles which we know and love to be made much bigger and better!

Also the SNES CD would have to be realistically priced. Maybe even cheaper than cartridges for it to catch on and become appealing to the customer.

Joseph Gaffney,
Chapelfields, Coventry

An interesting and realistic view of the CD add-on there, Joe. The idea that the games on CD are similar but larger than the ones already on cartridge will no doubt please programmers, who'd find such projects easy. Don't you think it would be nice to see loads of new games heading off in directions you wouldn't expect? Eh?

'BEEN GIVEN GORE'

I am writing to express my views on the public notions on the hidden secrets of *Mortal Kombat II* – which do not exist, by the way.

There are no animalities or extra Dead Pool fatalities. There is a guide out at the moment claiming that these do exist, but the publishers are in a lot of... (*trouble – Ed*) with Acclaim, and the Nintendo Hotline became very frustrated the day after the magazine's release.

The designers have done great work on *Mortal Kombat II* – they have released all cheats (how to play Smoke, for example) and there are numerous fatalities, so what more could we ask for?

Play as Kintaro or Shao Kahn? They've given us Shang Tsung for heaven's sake! And Sonya and even Kano are returning in *MKIII.* The crux of the matter is that we have been given gore and an almost arcade perfect rendition of this great game, and quite frankly the public and media still search for more moves and fatalities and, when there are none, they moan and ignore the good points.

Bilal Bhatti,
Windsor, Berks

That's enough on *Mortal Kombat II!* Bilal has given us all a sound telling off, even though we have never moaned about animalities or anything. So let's talk about something else for a change. Like how to get gore on *Mortal Kombat.*

'POINTS TO THE PEOPLE'

In reply to your SNES CD article last issue, I would like to state a few points to the people. If a SNES CD was released then it would have to be very quick. Sony and Sega are already at work. The whole point of an add on in the first place is to offer new, next generation performance. So in brief, the CD should run at around 25MHz and have around 2Mb of RAM, texture map assist and a headphone socket.

I know the spec is not amazing, but it has to retail for a maximum of £99. At this price the CD add-on would not be aiming to take on the PlayStation, but to maintain the SNES market until Ultra 64 becomes reality.

So would I buy a SNES CD for £99 including *Zelda 4?* Yep. I pay about £80 for a decent import cart. Imagine *Starfox 3,* replete with full

KINDLY LEAVE THE STAGE

This month we're featuring our own jokes, mainly because the ones sent in by you are rubbish. Mind you, ours aren't much better.

Q. Why did the mushroom have three girlfriends?
A. Because he was a fun-guy.
James

A horse walks into a bar and the barman says 'Why the long face?'
James

Q. What's orange and sounds like a parrot?
A. A carrot.
Debs

Q. What do you call a man whose had the seat of his trousers ripped by a lion?
A. Claude Bottom.
Ollie

Q. What's brown and sounds like a bell?
A. Dung.
Everyone

Q. How does an Ethiopian say goodbye?
A. Abyssinia.
Wil

Get 5/10 or above for your joke and you win yourself a stupendous T-shirt. Kindly Leave The Stage, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

'SOMEONE LIKE MADONNA'

If the SNES CD takes off, does it mean that many more companies will be able to write games? Don't Nintendo set the prices and availability of cartridge chips and hardware, making it impossible for smaller developers to get a look in unless they've got a brilliant, obviously popular game.

With CDs, what's to stop the sort of situation which you see on the Amiga, with small companies making quirky (often marvellous) games?

And why can't someone like Madonna put all their best songs onto a SNES CD together with SNES videos which you either watch or can play a game along with? Me and my brother think this is a great idea. The Cure could do it as well.

Thomas Marvell, Stoke on Trent, Staffs

It's not as simple as you think, Thomas. Developing SNES games costs a lot of cash. The cost of the cart hardware isn't what stops any company developing; rather, it's the cost of making a game which is as good, if not better than most of the ones currently on sale. A small company couldn't just buy a load of blank CDs, write a game and bung it on them, before shipping them to the shops. Also, CD games will cost even more to develop because they're going to be much bigger than the cart games we've currently got.

And although your music CD idea has presumably got some merit, sadly, we couldn't find it.

In bed with your SNES and Madonna. (Make sure fluff doesn't get into the cartridge port. And unplug the SNES.)

control, rendered cut scenes and personally texture-mapped craft with your name on the side. Imagine *Final Fantasy IIII* – 100 meg, fully rendered characters like *Donkey Kong* and instead of Mode 7 travel sections, we're treated to *Starfox*-like travel scenes.

SSF2X would be great. Akuma, Shadow combos and a hidden version of *Dark Stalkers*. Ah well. my C64 has finished loading. Back to *Impossible Mission*.

Richard Melville, Exeter, Devon

Good points, Richard. Nintendo won't be producing a SNES-based PlayStation or Saturn-basher, but they've got every chance of making a CD system which gives the SNES a whole new dimension of gaming. And seeing as there are thousands of programmers who now know the SNES and its capabilities very well indeed, this would be a powerful system indeed.

'DON'T DESERVE TO LIVE'

What about all the RPGs that the Japanese get? I seem to recall you mentioning that they get released at the rate of about one every right days or so. Why don't any of them seem to get released over here? Let's take some guesswork here. Let's say that, at the most, 30% of them are terrible and don't deserve to live. Let's say that another 30% are totally Japanese orientated and wouldn't go down well over here at all, apart from a select few who would like all that weird Japanese stuff (in other words, *Super Play* readers). That still leaves 40%. That's 20 games ever year that never see the light of day over here. Okay, so RPGs don't sell as well over here as they do in Japan, so if that's cut in half, that's still 10 or 11 games a year, or about one a month. So why don't we seem to get any of them?

If they don't release more, perhaps *Super Play* could get a deal going with an importer so we can get the games cheaper with a bulk purchase. You could put a form in the mag, we fill it in and send off our cheques and at the end of the month you buy a huge number of games and post off the ones we ordered. The importers make a profit, you gets lots of new readers and we get the great games we deserve as devoted Nintendsters.

Nick Gill, Lechlade, Glos

THE SUPER PLAY INTERESTING-O-METER

What will and what won't turn us on...

Virtual Boy and 3D

Rubbish Spectrum games which we've forgotten

HOT

NOT

SNES CD

Beat-'em-ups

HIGHLIGHTS

What does SNES stand for?
Mark Walmley, Bristol
Surely Not Everybody's Stupid.

Can my SNES run Mega Drive games?
Mark Walmley, Bristol
We give up.

Would you like to buy my NES?
Peter Wan, Ipswich
Oh, go on then.

'TRYING TO WALK IN'

Is the English version of *Secret Of Mana* an exact translation of the American game that you rated so highly because if it is, it must surely be one of the most over-rated game around. The gameplay is full of flaws that make playing the game a totally frustrating experience.

For example;

1. When you guide your character out of a dangerous situation only to find you come to a standstill because one of the CPU-controlled characters is stuck behind an obstacle or trying to walk in the other direction through a wall. You then have to retrace your steps back through the danger that you have just avoided to retrieve the other character.
2. The sprite constantly walking around with a fully-charged weapon causing the whole game to slow down to a snail's pace.
3. The character you are controlling being hit by an enemy, then, just as you climb to your feet, being struck again before it's possible to draw your weapon. This action repeats itself until you are dead.

These are not flaws that just appear at odd times, but are present throughout the entire playing of the game. I would be interested to hear if anyone else has suffered any similar problems with the PAL version of this game, or is it just me being too critical?

Andrew Hutchinson, Todmorden, Lancashire

The English version of *Mana* is indeed an exact translation of the US version. And in the *Super Play* office, we've experienced your points one and three. But these have happened rarely, and although you're right that they are flaws, they certainly don't spoil the game for us.

Most of our readers would, we're sure, agree with us. But if these niggles get on your nerves, Andrew, then perhaps RPGs are not the games for you.

'NO PUN INTENDED'

When I originally heard that the Ultra 64 was to be released and I saw the version of *Killer Instinct* shown on *Bad Influence* I immediately decided that I would sell my SNES and buy an Ultra 64 as soon as they were released.

But then came my birthday and with that came *Secret Of Mana* – this is the finest game ever made, readers. The plot sucks the player into *Mana* addiction, the graphics are great and the sound really has to be heard to be believed – I'm actually addicted to the music! It's the best use I've ever put £35 to – yes only £35!

Now I'm really not sure. With *Secret Of Mana II* on the way, I don't know whether to get the next piece of hardware magic or keep the old hardware and get the next piece of RPG magic (no pun intended).

What should I do? It would make up my mind if Squaresoft were to start developing for the Ultra 64. Will they? Help! I'm so stressed now that I think I'll have to relax in the world of *Mana*.

Alan McDonald, Cumbernauld, Scotland

Aha! Now this is more like the sort of *Mana*-related letter we're used to. Everyone at *Super Play* thought it was a classic game, and it seems that most of our readers do as well.

To answer your question Alan, Squaresoft are rumoured to be planning *Final Fantasy VII* for the Ultra 64. But this is, as yet, only a rumour. So our advice is to stick with your SNES, enjoy RPGing to your heart's content and when the Ultra 64 comes out find out what's officially being written for it and review the situation then.

By the way, what pun?

This seems as good a point as any to do an update on our RPG demand. The *Super Play* readers crusade has had the desired effect, and Nintendo have certainly listened to you.

Secret Of Mana was a victory, and Nintendo have done a deal with Squaresoft (US) to have first dibs on any RPG carts for the European market. More of which later.

'LOVE PASSWORDS'

I am writing about the criticism that Nintendo magazines give to passwords. Passwords are for people who are either unable to complete the game in one session, or for those who don't have enough time to play. I come under the latter category. I just don't have the time to complete a game in one go. I have other commitments. So because of passwords I am able to complete the game without having to play for hours on end.

I love passwords and those who don't like them shouldn't use them. If you play the game from start to finish without using passwords then congratulations. This doesn't mean they aren't a good thing. In fact, they are very useful indeed, so stop giving them a bad rap!

Steven Sloan,
Caldercruix, Airdrie

Hold up! We haven't ever given passwords 'a bad rap'. They make sound sense in every respect. It could be argued that they prolong the lives of many games because when *Super Play* prints lists of passwords, people who have given up with these games because they're stuck can suddenly jump to somewhere after the bit they were stuck on, thus giving the game a whole new lease of life.

Also, many programmers add special password combinations which give the player extra lives. These cheats are also a fine idea because they add a new element to your playing, and you may finish the game.

WRITE NOW!

Send your letters to us. We read them all and, unless you're talking utter crap, we'll probably print them.

PLAYBACK, *SUPER PLAY*, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH BA1 2BW.

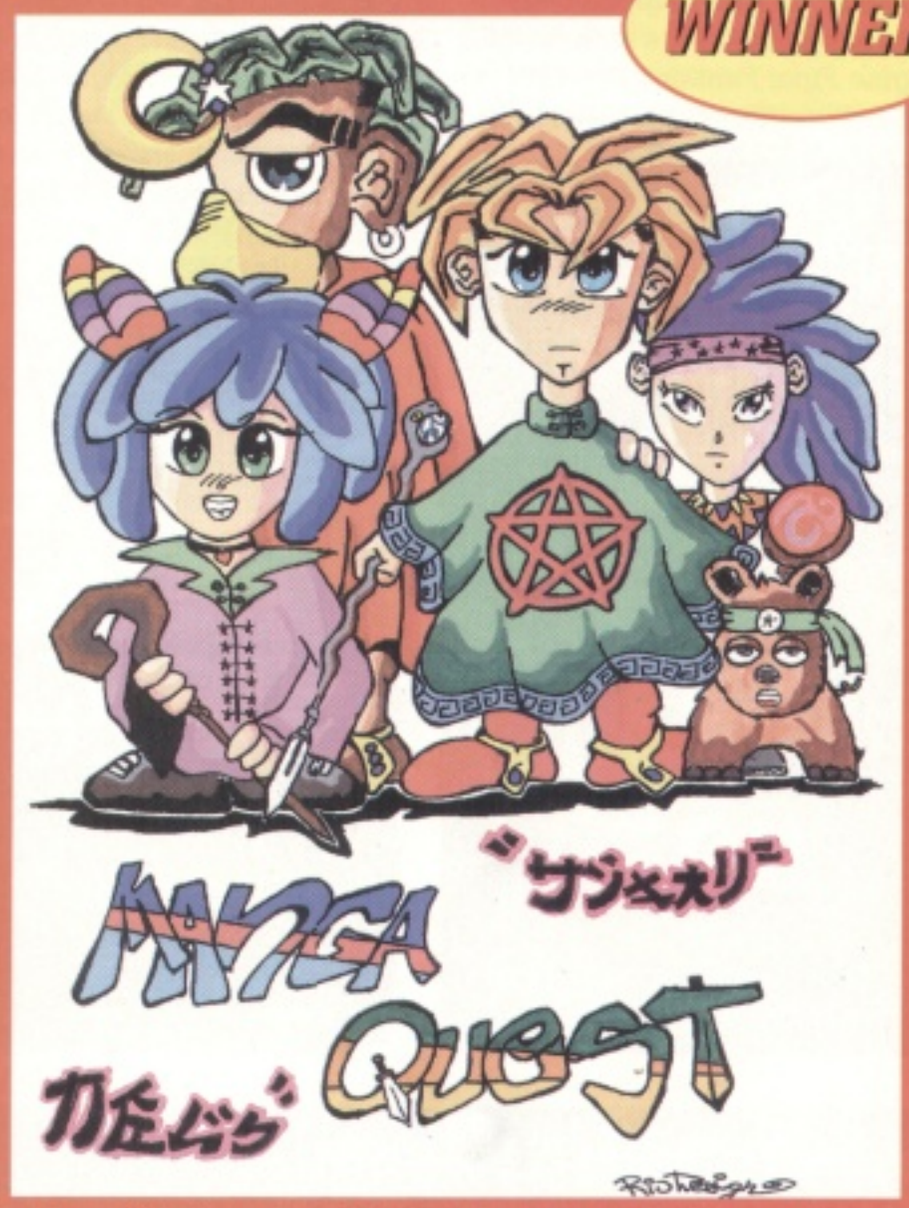
ENVELOPE ART!

Well at least it brings a smile to faces of normally miserable postmen across the nation. And heaven knows they have to get up early.

***Super Play* regular Laura Watton aims her talented pen at manga favourite *Ranma 1/2*. Good likeneses and she's handled the watercolours well.**

M Hisakodo from Maidenhead has managed to find his own style while still keeping the anime look. Not an easy task.

WINNER



This month's winner is Paolo Volpi from Italy with his *Secret Of Mana*-esque characters. Okay, so it's not on an envelope but we'll forgive him this time. Use of strong colours helped this to stand out.

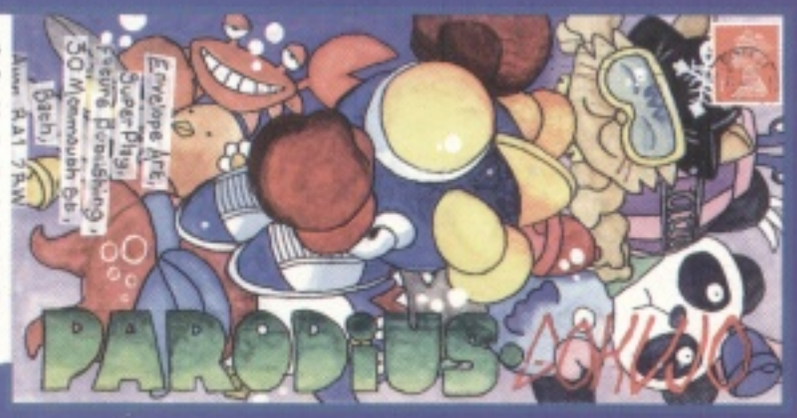
Christian's *Earthworm Jim* still looks colourful even though it's on a manilla envelope.

A superb *Ah! My Goddess* Christmas scene from M Kwok from London with excellent likenesses.

At only 4 years of age Ben Kelly obviously has a artistic career ahead of him.

Paul Connor has put in a lot of effort to get the colour of his *Aladdin* pic to lay flat – the result looks all the better for it.

***Parodius* is a popular subject but this pic from Charlie Rowsell was easily the most striking.**



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Walking to the shops to buy *Super Play*, you'll fall into a deep hole forever; subscribing would have prevented this tragedy.

ARIES
The army use your house for artillery training. Shelter under that copy of *Super P*... doh! You didn't subscribe!

TAURUS
Love blossoms for you. Your loved one asks what SNES magazine you subscribe to. You don't, and the love soon dies.

GEMINI
You will win a subscription letter competition. But you must be a subscriber to stand a chance.

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Go home. No one likes you much anyway. And you smell. Only subscribing to *Super Play* can change all this.

SCORPIO
You're a Ford Granada, not a person. Time for an MOT and service. And leave a copy of *SP* in the glove box.

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King Arthur was a Sagittarius. As is Shigeru Miyamoto. And both have got *Super Play* subscriptions.

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You're devoted enough to wade through all the other star signs to find yours. You sound like an ideal subscriber.

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THE SUPER PLAY GAME LIBRARY

WHAT CART?

Give in to the forces that have drawn you once more to this section. Accept that there are things in the world which science can't explain. Ghosts, spirits and that Loch Ness monster thing all exist, and their combined thoughtwaves have led you to read the following entries. Some of them are quite funny, too.

PART FOUR • Q – S

Q*BERT
PZ · Jap/US/NTVIC/8Mbit · SP3 67%

This'll take you back to the days when games were games, there was no war and everybody was exactly the same height. Or rather, it won't. It's got some nostalgia value, but not much.

RACE DRIVIN'
D · US/UK/THQ/8Mbit · SP3 35%

No no no! Games like this aren't supposed to get through Nintendo's quality control. This is not so much a race game as a pile of runny puppy do, of the sort laid by a shivery poodle in the park.

RACCOON RASCAL
PZ · Jap/NCS/Masiya/8Mbit · SP21 79%

Very Japanese, this game. And very enjoyable as well. It's as distinctive as Simon Callow's voice in *Four Weddings And A Funeral*. Or perhaps more so. Buy it.

RAIDEN DENSETSU
S · Jap/Toei/8Mbit · 54%

A blaster in the traditional sense from the Land of the Rising Sun. Trouble is, it's too slow to provide sustained enjoyment. This, of course, explains the 54% mark it undoubtedly got.

RAINBOW BELL ADVENTURES
P · UK/Konami/8Mbit · SP18 70%

Konami are good at games like this. It's cute, it's easy to get into and it becomes a tricky platformer later. Very enjoyable. Like a Caramac bar or a walk along Weymouth beach.

RAMPART
ST · US/Electronic/8Mbit · SP2 79%

Castle destruction ahoy! This is a game which looks simple but is jolly good addictive fun once you get into it. The two-player mode will bring a smile to many, many faces, such is the pleasure it engenders.

RANMA 1/2
A · Jap/NCS/Masiya/8Mbit · 75%

A neat anime beat-'em-up, but sadly sporting mismatched characters. This makes it rather tricky (unless you're playing one of the best characters). But overall, a fair amount of Japanese-related fun to be had.

RANMA 1/2 PART 2
A · Jap/NCS/Masiya/8Mbit · SP6 73%

Not much better than the original, actually. The characters look great and have bags of, er, character, but they're still not evenly matched. Very Japanese, though.

RANMA 1/2 HARD BATTLE
A · Jap/Rumic Soft/8Mbit · SP21 79%

The best *Ranma 1/2* game to date. This is still unbalanced, but boasts the best graphics, the neatest gameplay and some of the most amusing sounds in any SNES game. And it sold very well in Japan, too.

REDLINE F1 RACER
D · US/Absolute/8Mbit · SP14 49%

The graphics aren't too miserable in this. But it's a crap game and impossible to play with any degree of success. This is a crying shame, but hey! What can you do? We just review the things. Get off our case.

REN AND STIMPEY 'VEEDIOTS'
P · UK/THQ/8Mbit · SP12 47%

Potentially a good licence, but unfortunately this has turned into a rather rubbish game with nice, weird graphics but little in the way of stimulating gameplay. Boo and, indeed, hoo.

RIVAL TURF
A · Jap/US/UK/Jeleco/8Mbit · SP2 58%

Fighting games have a hard time of it, being compared to 'the big two', but if they're a bit crap, they deserve the shoeing we give them. This is a bit crap and deserves the kicking we dished out to it.

ROAD RIOT 4WD
D · US/UK/THQ/8Mbit · SP4 20%

A split-screen driving game, but one which is so bad, cave-dwelling tribes in Papua New Guinea would be scornful of its primitiveness and lack of sophistication. And they might smash it up with clubs, too.

ROBOCOP 3
P · US/UK/Ocean/8Mbit · SP2 50%

A very, very difficult game but one which is often unfair as well. So you get no sense of challenge and you'll end up as frustrated as a man trying to juggle eels with Body Shop massage oil on his hands.

KEY

PZ	Puzzle
BD	Board
S	Shooter
P	Platform
ST	Strategy
SP	Sport
SB	Scrolling Beat-'Em-Up
A	Action
R	RPG
AR	Action RPG
SS	Super Scope
D	Driving

ROBOCOP VS TERMINATOR

P — UK/Virgin/8Mbit — SP14 27%

Ever so disappointing, this game has some neat effects and some lovely graphics, but drops to the ground in the gameplay department. Not even the entire cast of TV's *Casualty* could revive it, probably.

THE ROCKETEER

A — Jap/US/IGS/8Mbit — 33%

Some nice graphics and a fine set of tunes, but beyond that there's a gaping void where the game should be. In other words, you'll feel immensely unsatisfied with this one, should you unwisely buy it.

ROCK 'N' ROLL RACING

D — UK/Interplay/8Mbit — SP12 88%

Combines classic rock tracks (done well) with exciting gameplay and superb graphics. A marvellous effort, and even better in two-player mode. And there are some nice hidden touches as well. Huzzah!

ROCKY RODENT

P — Jap/Irem/8Mbit — SP12 50%

Rocky Rubbish, more like. The Japanese must be mad if they think games like this are in any way brilliant. Still, it's a different culture and everything, so let's not cause a diplomatic incident or anything. They might invade us.

ROGER CLEMENS' MVP BASEBALL

SP — US/Acclaim/8Mbit — 73%

Great animation from the Acclaim team, but they haven't worked out the controls as well as they might. This puts a bit of a dampener on the proceedings, as you struggle with the joypad and the recalcitrants on-screen.

ROMANCING THE THREE KINGDOMS II

ST — US/Koei/8Mbit — SP? 55%

Koei are well-known for their strategy games, but this doesn't necessarily mean that any of them are any good. Some are, but this one is just mediocre. Like a stale bun, or something.

ROMANCING THE THREE KINGDOMS III

ST — US/Koei/8Mbit — SP20 67%

This is better than part two, certainly. But it's tricky to master, and we'd only recommend it to dedicated strategy war-gamers only. And Stephen Hawking, on account of the fact that he's so brainy.

RPM RACING

D — Jap/US/Interplay/8Mbit — 58%

Not the best in the world, but it's still a bit of fun. The game is let down by the ragged scrolling, which constantly reminds you you're playing a SNES game and are not actually 'there' on the track, doing it for real.

R-TYPE III

S — Jap/Iremi/8Mbit — SP16 83%

A decent shoot-'em-up, this one. It's fast, there's loads to do and the action can only be described as jolly exciting. It's not quite good enough to make it into the 90% plus category, but nevertheless, we liked it, frankly.

RUN SABER

A — US/UK/Atlus/8Mbit — SP10 59%

Pretty backdrops, but not much in the way of gameplay. That's what we said before about *Run Saber*, and it's as true today as it's ever been. Although, with more space, we should add further comments. Oops.

RUSHING BEAT RUN

A — Jap/Jaleco/8Mbit — SP5 60%

Good graphics and fun visuals, but this is a beat-'em-up which would tax the patience of even people serving long prison sentences and who have little else to occupy their minds.

RUSHING BEAT 3

A — Jap/Jaleco/8Mbit — SP19 66%

Not much of an improvement, this. It's still got the word 'tedium' printed right through it like the word 'Blackpool' is printed right through a stick of rock hailing from that Northern seaside town, with its illuminated tower.

SD DODGEBALL

SP — Jap/Banpresto/8Mbit — 42%

An unimpressive effort which, if translated as an early '80s TV show, would be *Dempsey And Makepeace*, only without the lovely Glynis Barber in it. Not worth watching, in other words.

SD GREAT BATTLE

A — Jap/Banpresto/8Mbit — SP? 38%

A rubbish arcade adventure which wouldn't look out of place sitting atop a pile of discarded MacDonald's french fries cartons in a dour Midlands shopping arcade in the slicing February rain.

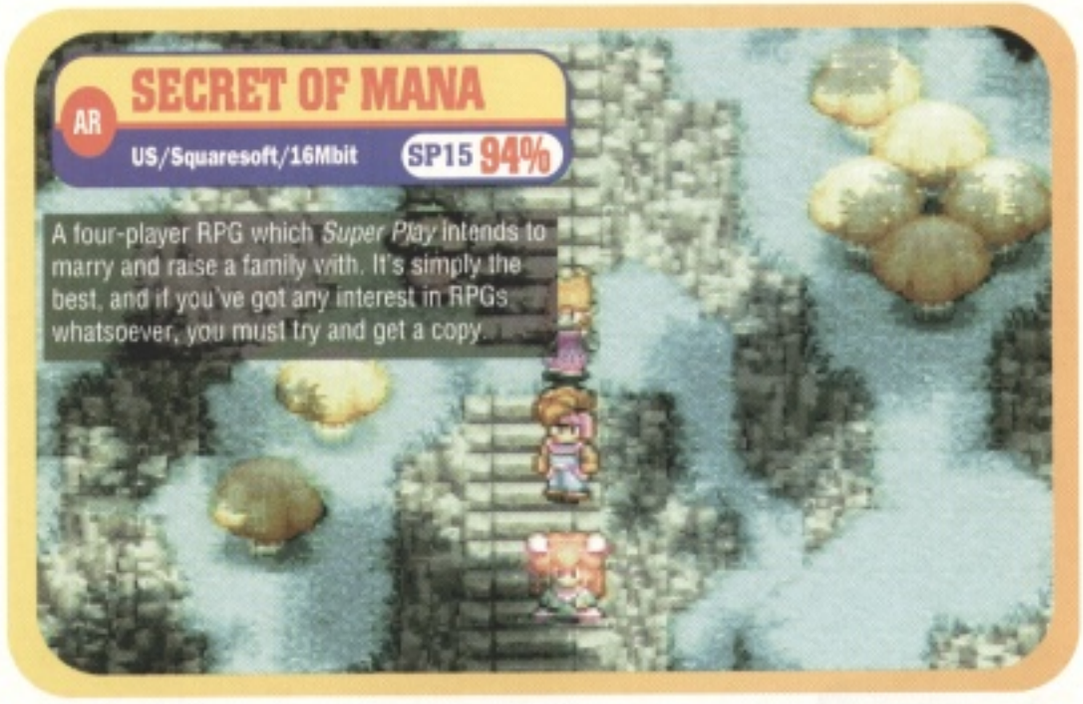
SD GREAT BATTLE III

A — Jap/Banpresto/8Mbit — SP9 63%

A better effort. This would be quite at home in the living room of a well-to-do family living in Harrow or Northolt. But that doesn't make it a classic or anything. Just not too bad.

SECRET OF MANA

AR — US/Squaresoft/16Mbit — SP15 94%


A four-player RPG which Super Play intends to marry and raise a family with. It's simply the best, and if you've got any interest in RPGs whatsoever, you must try and get a copy.

INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE

SUPER PLAY — TOP 5 VEHICLES

The ones that we think are very easy to control properly and quite a lot of fun to drive around on your SNES.

1 MARIO'S KART Nintendo
Fast, goofy and wacky, this vehicle is our top number one. The game's not bad either.

2 SPEED RACER'S CAR Accolade
It's low, white and fast, and it's good at slamming into bales of hay. What more do you want?

3 THE SKIDOO FROM CANNON FODDER Sony
Tough to control, but at least you can run over people in it.

4 SPIKE MCFANG'S VEHICLE Nintendo
Mad, bad and a bit weird, Spike has to put up with a lot. And this vehicle doesn't help.

5 BATMAN RETURN'S BATMOBILE Konami
Who can resist the Batmobile? It's a completely great car in every respect. Hooray!

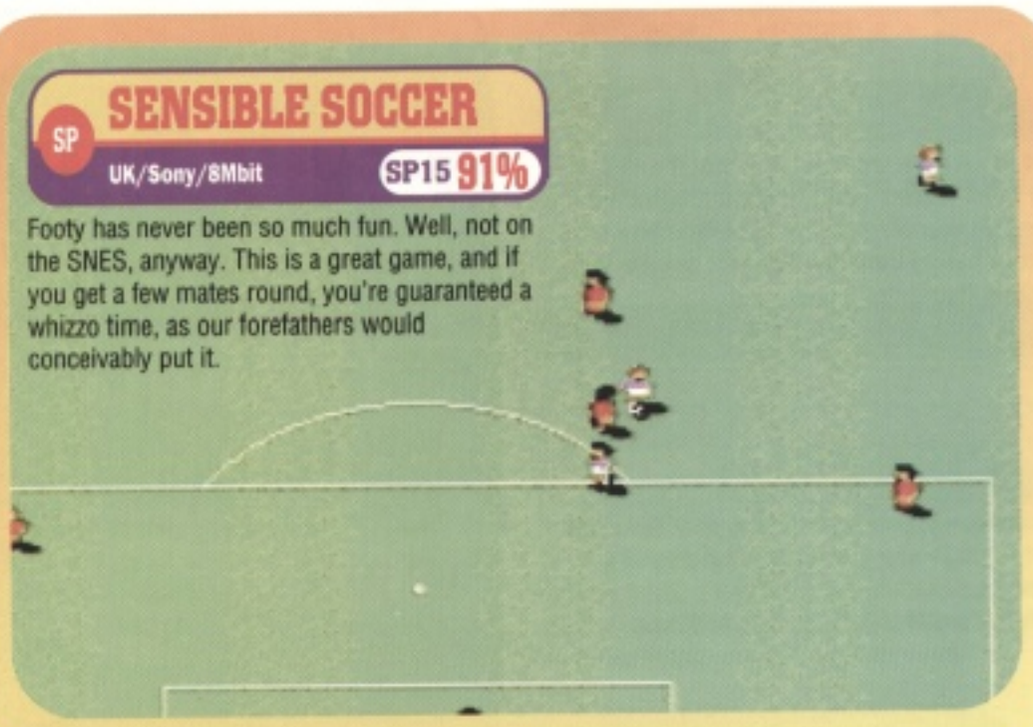
SENSIBLE SOCCER

SP

UK/Sony/8Mbit

SP15 91%

Footy has never been so much fun. Well, not on the SNES, anyway. This is a great game, and if you get a few mates round, you're guaranteed a whizzo time, as our forefathers would conceivably put it.



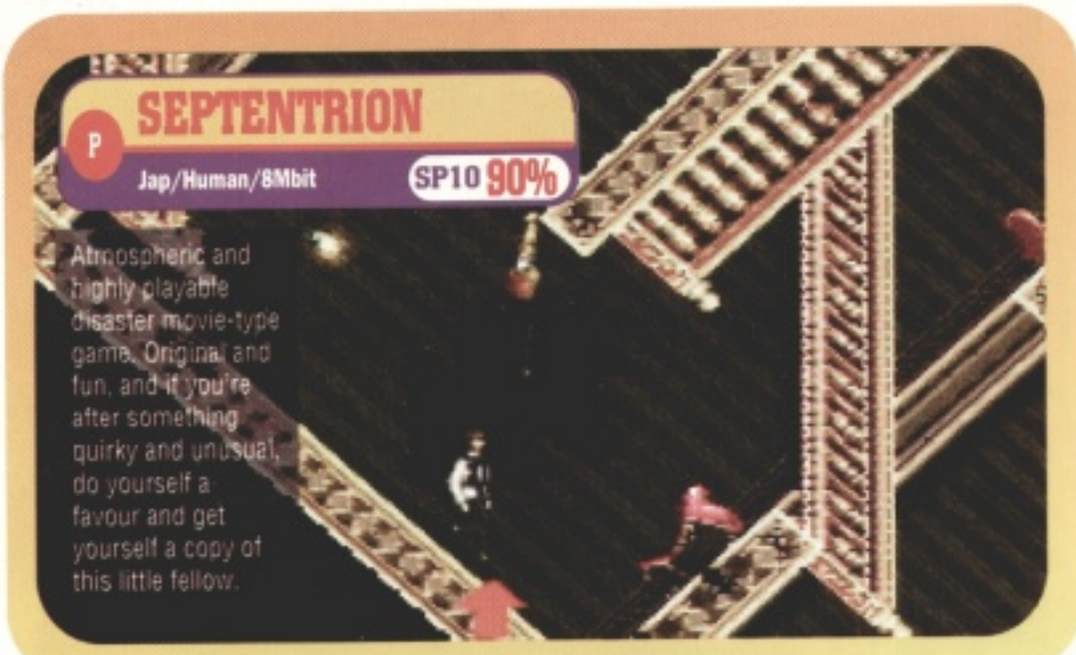
SEPTENTRION

P

Jap/Human/8Mbit

SP10 90%

Atmospheric and highly playable disaster movie-type game. Original and fun, and if you're after something quirky and unusual, do yourself a favour and get yourself a copy of this little fellow.



SEVENTH SAGA

R

US/Enix/8Mbit

SP14 69%

A rather bog-standard RPG which won't set the world on fire. It won't even try to put a damp Swan Vesta to one corner of the globe, in fact. Not even a corner filled by ocean, which won't burn anyway.

SIM CITY

ST

Jap/US/UK/Maxis & Nintendo/16Mbit

SP1 84%

Build a city and make sure you run it properly. Sounds boring, but in fact it's astonishingly rivetting and is a right classic now. *Sim City* is a famous game and you should get hold of a copy as soon as you like.

SHADOWRUN

R

UK/Data East/16bit

SP10 85%

A very neatly put-together adventure game with astonishing graphics and a fine sense of atmosphere. It's also got some smart puzzles in it and you'll enjoy it a great deal, if you're anything like me.

SHANGHAI 2

PZ

Jap/US/Activision/8Mbit

SP9 58%

A basic puzzle game taken from the classic 'real' game. It's pretty standard stuff but, like most puzzles, can become addictive if you get into it and play it loads.

SKY BLAZER

PL

UK/Sony/8Mbit

SP14 78%

A pretty game with a fiery atmosphere. But underneath all the flames and hot ashes there's, er, well, not much actually. It's nice but too lightweight for rock gamesters like ourselves in this office.

SIDE POCKET

SP

UK/Marubeni/8Mbit

SP19 86%

It's a pool game, but not like water polo. Pool being more like snooker, you see. And it's jolly good. Jangly tunes and a fine sense of what it's like to play real pool makes this a fine game.

SKÜLJAGGER

A

US/American Softworks/8Mbit

SP4 58%

This misses the mark and embeds itself in the wall of a cottage several hundred yards from the original target. If you live there, get out because you don't want to meet *Sküljagger*. It's a bit nob.

SIM EARTH

ST

Jap/US/Imagineer/8Mbit

SP3 34%

Bigger and bolder, but doomed to failure because it just doesn't work well on the SNES, this world-building game is just too boring and fiddly to make many friends. Be its enemy instead.

INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE
SUPER PLAY

TOP 5 'CARTOON CHARACTERS IN FAIRLY DUFF GAMES

Cartoon characters. Don't you love them? They get everywhere and are capable of anything. One even became a US President!

1 PINK PANTHER
Tecmagik

So here he is, the rinky-dink Panther. Remember that? And what does rinky-dink mean?

2 REN AND STIMPY
TH•Q

Now they were truly bizarre. But sometimes we laughed. And they *are* cartoons.

3 MICKEY'S ULTIMATE CHALLENGE
Capcom

The grandaddy of them all.

4 BUGS BUNNY
Sunsoft

Carrots, explosions and wisecracks in a New York accent. That's Bugs Bunny.

5 KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE
Acclaim

We had to include someone from the *Simpsons*. Not Bart.

SMASH BALL

SP

Jap/Charactersoft/8Mbit

SP23 82%

An addictive, if simple game with very cute graphics and a nifty line in weirdness. Like those air-hockey games you used to get in the observation deck at the swimming pool. Uncomplicated fun, really.

SOCCER SHOOTOUT

SP

US/Capcom/8Mbit

SP24 80%

Capcom did this, and they surely can't be too proud of it. Oh, it's not bad, but for something that Capcom have done, you'd expect it to be slightly smoother round the edges. But that's not to say it's rubbish an' that.

SOCCER KID

PL

UK/Ocean/8Mbit

SP18 84%

A pretty decent platform game with an exciting football twist. Although the football twist is very exciting. But the graphics are nice and the game trundles on in an acceptable way, for sure.

SOLDERS OF FORTUNE

S

US/Spectrum Holobyte/8Mbit

SP18 89%

Called *The Chaos Engine* in this country, this is a marvellous game. It's got plenty of exploring and blasting, and expect some dead exciting graphics to appear. Because they do. Regularly.

SOLSTICE II: EQUINOX

R | US/UK/Sony Imagesoft/8Mbit | SP8 90%

A great RPG with tons of adventuring, brilliant graphics and some lovely sounds. A game to sink your teeth into which won't make your jaw ache, even though you'll want to remain like that for some considerable time indeed.

SONIC BLAST MAN

SB | Jap/US/Taito/8Mbit | SP2 69%

A scrolling beat-'em-up which sits anonymously in the middle of every other beat-'em-up which has come out of Japan in the last couple of years. Nothing, indeed, to write home about in the slightest.

SONIC BLAST MAN 2

SB | Jap/US/Taito/8Mbit | SP23 31%

For some reason, this is rubbish. It really is a waste of time, and if you're considering buying it, please don't. We urge you to reconsider, because you'll be getting no enjoyment out of it once you do own it.

SOS

PL | US/Vic/Tokai/8Mbit | SP21 83%

This is the same game as *Septentrion,* and boy does it show. Well, obviously. But anyway, there's lots to see and do, and it's a neat new idea which will excite you more than a little.

SOULBLAZER

AR | US/Enix/8Mbit | SP2 89%

A slick and graphically gorgeous action adventure which is well worth chugging through. If you're an adventure fan, you'll find this to be eminently satisfactory in a great many ways.

SPACE ACE

A | UK/Empire/8Mbit | SP17 58%

Cartoon platform action game which fails in all of these. It's a brave attempt, but so was the *Charge Of The Light Brigade.* Don't touch this, except with thick mittens on.

SPACE FOOTBALL

SP | Jap/US/Triffix/8Mbit | SP? 52%

A strange game and no mistake. There isn't a vast reservoir of enjoyment here, though. In fact it's a bit of a dog. But since it's virtually unheard of in the UK, you don't need to worry about it overly much.

SPACE INVADERS

S | Jap/Taito/4Mbit | SP21 40%

The game that started it all, arguably. But seeing it after all this time just serves to show everyone how it's aged poorly. Well, it was around in the '70s which is more than can be said for many *Super Play* readers.

SPACE MEGAFORCE

S | US/Toho/Compile/8Mbit | SP21 87%

A really good shoot-'em-up, this. Or it was when it first came out. It's hard to say how this stacks up today. But if you can find it cheap, the best of luck to you.

SPANK'S QUEST

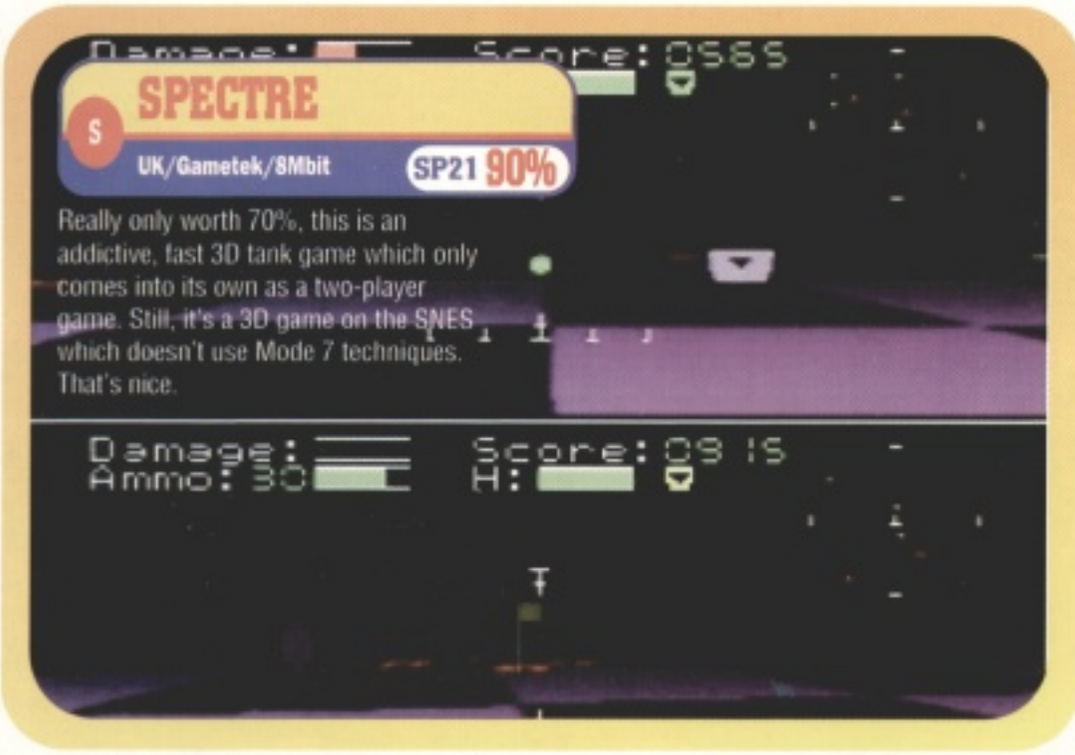
P | Jap/US/Natsume/8Mbit | 58%

A bizarre game popular with MPs. Although that's something to do with the title. The game, however, wasn't and indeed isn't much fun. Steer a wide course round it, unless you're a member of the Cabinet.

SPECTRE

S | UK/Gametek/8Mbit | SP21 90%

Really only worth 70%, this is an addictive, fast 3D tank game which only comes into its own as a two-player game. Still, it's a 3D game on the SNES which doesn't use Mode 7 techniques. That's nice.



SPEED RACER

D | US/UK/Accolade/8Mbit | SP22 65%

A curious mix of driving and platforminess, this doesn't do either genre much justice, and is strangely unfulfilling. Never mind. If you're a fan of the cartoon character, you might like it. A bit.

SPIDERMAN AND THE X-MEN

PL | US/UK/Acclaim/8Mbit | SP22 72%

Not a very good game, it's only virtue is having the wholesome *X-Men* in it. But as a platformer, you can consign it to the same bin when you put potato peelings and onion skins. And the bits of garlic cloves you don't use.

SPIKE McFANG

PL | US/Bullet Proof/8Mbit | SP24 82%

A decent game, this. It's got charm, speed, smoothness and some impressive graphics. You'll enjoy playing it, certainly. The cutesiness of some of the characters won't get on your nerves, either.

SPINDIZZY WORLDS

PZ | Jap/US/UK/Ascii/8Mbit | SP2 69%

A neat puzzler which requires you to use some nifty skills and both hemispheres of your brain. Your pituitary gland might even be called on to secrete some mind-enhancing fluid as well.

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED CHAMPIONSHIP

SP | US/Malibu/8Mbit | SP19 70%

US football and baseball on one cart? Can't go wrong? Well neither is done in a particularly special way, and your eyelids will get heavy as you struggle to maintain your interest in the on-screen antics.

STARFOX/STARWING

S | Jap/US/UK/Nintendo/8Mbit | SP7 93%

An absolutely brilliant 3D shoot-'em-up which uses the fabled Super FX chip. Everybody on the planet knows how good *Starwing* is. So why don't you get your copy? Do it now!

STAR TREK – THE NEXT GENERATION

ST | US/Spectrum Holobyte/8Mbit | SP21 39%

The entire crew of NCC-1701 would punch and kick this cart to death if it ever appeared on their holodeck. And no court in the Universe would find their actions in any way reprehensible. Because this game is pump, you see.

STREET FIGHTER II

A | Jap/US/UK/Capcom/8Mbit | SP1 94%

Ever heard of this one? Only the best bleedin' beat-'em-up in the world. Or it was when it first came out. Since then we've seen the game improve. Read on and prepare yourself…

STREET FIGHTER II TURBO

A | Jap/US/UK/Capcom/16Mbit | SP11 96%

It's got the same playability, but it's faster and there are many enhancements. People have been known to have the chips surgically inserted into their heads so they can play *Street Fighter II Turbo* when they're sleeping. It's that good.

STRIKE GUNNER

S | Jap/US/UK/Activison/8Mbit | SP3 65%

Remember the days of vertical blasters? Well you can with this game. Although quite why you'd want to is something of a mystery to us deviants sheltering under the great *Super Play* oak in the heart of the forest.

STRIKER

SP | UK/Elite/8Mbit | SP10 89%

Whoah! Another great football game. It's easy to play, and it's a lot of fun. You can't really go wrong. There are loads of options and, oh, everything. If you don't fancy *Sensible Soccer* (slightly better), get this.

SUMO SPIRITS

SP | Jap/Takara/8Mbit | SP9 47%

Plays a decent game of sumo, but how would we know if it didn't? I mean, we're not exactly au fait with the precise ins and outs of the sport in this country, are we? So who cares?

SUNSET RIDERS

A | UK/Konami/8Mbit | SP12 87%

A good blasting game, is *Sunset Riders.* There's a great two-player option, but it's quite a lot of fun in one-player mode as well. Konami are pretty decent at stuff like this and you can't really go wrong.

NEXT MONTH

***Super Adventure Island* to *Super WWF*. Providing all the 'Supers' fit on four pages, that is.**

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ISSUE 4
Human Grand Prix reviewed; and a player's guide to *Another World*.

ISSUE 5
Game Genie vs Action Replay; *Assault Suits Valken* and *Kikikaikai* reviewed.

ISSUE 6
Starfox previewed; *Super SWIV* reviewed; *SFII* guide.

ISSUE 7
Starfox reviewed; fantasy game special; and lots more!

ISSUE 8
Pop'n Twinbee and *James Pond* reviewed; a player's guide to *Starfox*.

ISSUE 9
Loads on *SFII Turbo*; *Super Bomberman* challenge; an *Addams Family* guide.

ISSUE 10
Fixing your SNES; *Final Fight* and *Striker* reviewed; and a *Mystical Ninja* guide.

ISSUE 11
Super Mario Collection, *SFII Turbo* and *Mortal Kombat* reviewed; *Final Fight 2* guide.

ISSUE 12
A fantasy game special; an interview with Nintendo Hotline; and much more!

ISSUE 13
A football special, *Jurassic Park*, and *Top Gear* reviewed.

ISSUE 14
NIntendo's pricing policies; the horror of anime; *Sky Blazer*, *Clay Fighter* and *Plok!* reviewed; and more!

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What's in store for 1994?; *Aladdin* reviewed; and a *Jurassic Park* Super Player's Guide. Hurrah!

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Mega Man X and *NBA Jam* reviewed; Nintendo rap; *Solstice II: Equinox* and *Shadowrun* guides. Cor!

ISSUE 18
CES news; *Lufia*, *Super Puyo Puyo* and *Soccer Kid* reviewed; and a *Turtles* player's guide.

ISSUE 19
Fatal Fury 2 reviewed; a *Mystical Ninja 2* guide; we visit Nintendo of Japan; plus a free manga book.

ISSUE 20
Super Metroid reviewed; a football special; a *Mega Man X* guide; and how to get hold of cheap carts.

ISSUE 21
Vortex previewed; *Super Bomberman 2* and *Dragon* reviewed; and a *Clay Fighter* guide.

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Wild Trax reviewed; How to draw anime; exclusive *Syndicate* feature; *NBA Jam* guide and more!

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Super Street Fighter II reviewed; exclusive Squaresoft interview; *Super Metroid* player's guide.

ISSUE 24
Mortal Kombat reviewed; *Breath Of Fire* reviewed; *Super Street Fighter II* player's guide.

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Sparkster and *Secret Of Mana* reviewed; *Mortal Kombat II* player's guide; plus loads more.

ISSUE 26
Final Fantasy III, *Illusion Of Gaia* and *Syndicate* reviewed; *MKII* player's guide; and much more!

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Ultimate Parodius, *Donkey Kong Country* and *Demon's Blazon* reviewed; *Rock 'n' Roll Racing* player's guide.

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Can Samurai Spirits succeed where all other beat-'em-ups have failed?

ISSUE 28
***Samurai Spirits*, *Cannon Fodder* and *Clayfighter 2* reviewed; *Donkey Kong Country* player's guide.**

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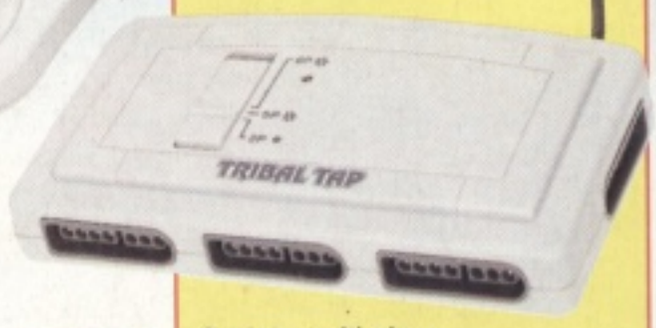

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IRRESPONSIBLE pictures

TENCHI-MUYO Vol 3

Pioneer LDCE

60 minutes (dubbed)

RRP: £12.99

PG

Pioneer's hectic release schedule shows no sign of slowing down in 1995 with the new *Green Legend Ran* and more adventures of *Moldiver* and *Tenchi*. If you're coming to *Tenchi Muyo* (*No Need For Tenchi*) late, we'll forgive you for being slightly confused. This really is a series that you need to watch from the beginning to get the most out of.

We're now up to episode five and our hero seems to have all his interstellar guests vying for his affections. All is well until galactic bad guy Kagato appears on the scene to wreck his wrath on Ryoko. Tenchi fails to stop Kagato and his grandfather has to reveal himself as Ayeka's long-lost fiancé and stop Kagato from destroying them all. Kagato escapes taking Ryoko with him, and so the scene is all set for episode six. Will Tenchi be able to finally master the hidden forces of his sword and rescue Ryoko? What follows can only be described as 'extremely weird'.

These latest episodes are the best so far. Not having to introduce loads of new characters, the writers have let their imaginations run riot. Little Ryu-Ohki finally grows up in a spectacular fashion and ideas like Kagato's ship having a normal and reverse side really do liven up what could have easily just become another super-beings, super battle.

It will be interesting to see if Pioneer bring the forthcoming Japanese TV series to the West. The UK anime charts have been dominated by the usual sci-fi and monsters lately, so we can only hope that the lighter side like *Tenchi* still sells enough to survive.

Wil Overton

4 out of 5

CRYING FREEMAN Episodes 5-6

Manga Video

100 minutes (dubbed)

RRP: £10.99

18

These are the last two installments of the *Crying Freeman* series and, as you'd expect, things get pretty frantic. Chapter five sees a replica of Crying Freeman being built by a gang of mad folk intent on taking on the 108 dragons.

The episode also features, perhaps, the largest character ever seen in any anime film. He's a bloke of about 20 feet in height, and Freeman has to wrestle him. As you might expect, our hero takes a wee bit of a pasting.

Chapter six is called *The Russian Connection*, and is the final battle. Freeman, apparently, has decided that virtually everybody in the world is a threat to his organisation so, naturally enough, has made up his mind to destroy everyone in the whole world. Well, that's how it seems.

Crying Freeman doesn't look quite like other anime. It's drawn in a deliberately rough, angular way, and much of the shading is obviously broad-stroked so you're aware that it is artwork rather than looking almost as if it's done by computer.

This is no bad thing (well, in my book, certainly). *Crying Freeman* has always been slightly 'artier' than many of its contemporary releases and, although it's packed with action, there's a strong element of style running through the series.

There isn't much point in joining the *Crying Freeman* series this late in the day but if you've already got or can get hold of the earlier episodes, you can't go wrong.

James Leach

4 out of 5

THE GUYVER Data 10

Manga Video

26 minutes (dubbed)

RRP: £7.99

PG

At the end of *Data 9*, Sho and his schooly chums were incarcerated in the Chronos organisation HQ. Things were looking grim for the gang.

But don't forget the Guyver III. This is Sho's best mate, and is of course as hard as he is. Guyver II is heading for Chronos to save Sho, but there's a chance that it all might go wrong and he'll be unmasked. This, as you might well imagine, would be a tragedy of Dickensian proportions.

I can't help thinking that the *Guyver* series has got more and more complicated as it's gone on. This makes it totally impenetrable for those who haven't got all the previous videos, and as there are nine of them it requires a massive financial outlay.

But for *Guyver* aficionados, this represents another slice of action and confusion. The action is as good as ever, with more and more of the Chronos Organisation being destroyed by the virtually unbeatable Guyvers, and the confusion is as bizarre as ever.

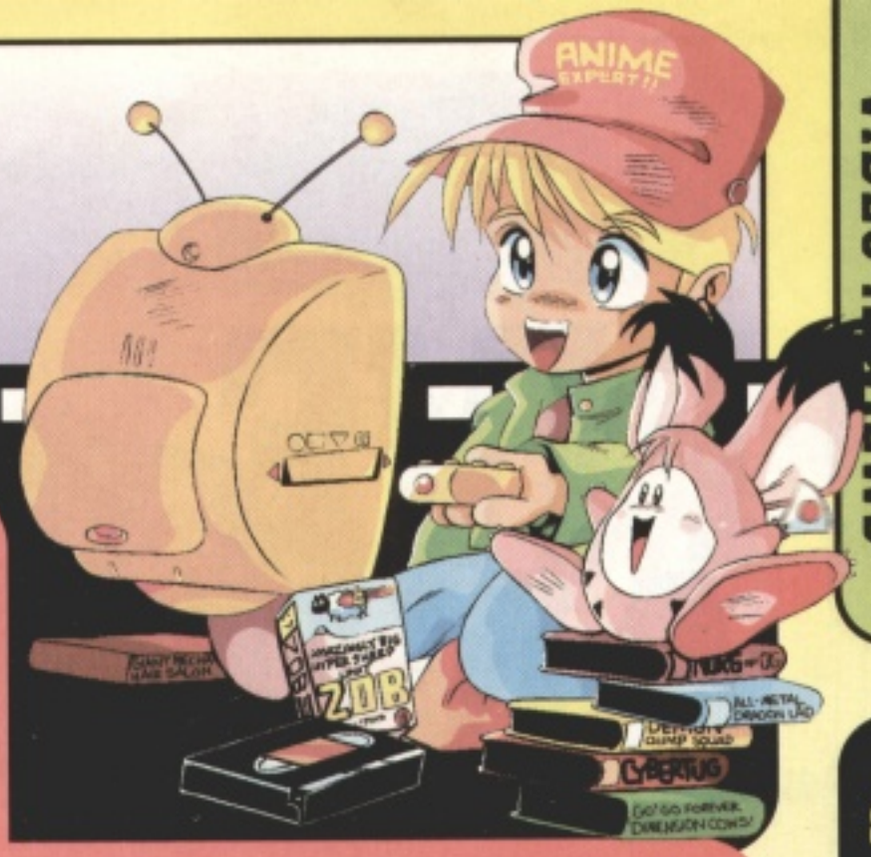
The whole *Guyver* series suffers from a little too much sentimentality, as the people involved come to terms with what's going on around them. Anime films are generally at their best when portraying astonishing action sequences which can't possibly be filmed in 'real life', rather than exploring the psyches of those involved. The Guyver has a tad too much of the latter.

But nevertheless, the series runs on, and jolly good fun it is too.

James Leach

3 out of 5

This month we take a special peek at the leader in an increasing trend of making anime versions of famous SNES beat-em-ups.



STREET FIGHTER II MOVIE

Capcom/Sony Music Entertainment (Japan) Inc

102 minutes

Although not officially available in the West yet, the *Street Fighter* anime movie has just been given a home video release in Japan and *Super Play* just couldn't wait to give you an unofficial review of the most eagerly awaited anime in the gaming world (well, our office anyway).

Not wasting any time at all, the film pitches headlong into a battle between Ryu and Sagat (as this is Japanese release we're going to use their versions of the names). Complete with fireballs and a Dragon Punch, Ryu leaves Sagat with his trademark chest scar, but they're not alone. Ryu is being secretly filmed and all his fighting moves analysed by a cyborg controlled by Vega. Vega's crime syndicate, hidden in a base in the mountains, is becoming very powerful through drug trafficking and arms deals. Looking to increase his elite super army, which at the moment consists of Sagat, Bison, Balrog and Cammy, Vega sends his cyborgs to seek out the most powerful World Warriors with a view to recruiting them into his 'Shadow' clan. One by one we see all 16 fighters analysed but gradually Vega comes to realise that the two strongest warriors by far are our heroes Ryu and Ken.

Meanwhile Commander Guile and Chun-Li from Interpol are on Shadow's case after Chunners manages to capture Cammy after an assasination attempt. Balrog is dispatched to get rid of Chun-Li and, after a pitched battle in her apartment, Chunners is left in a critical condition in hospital where Guile resolves to finish Vega. The film heads towards a dramatic conclusion where a brain-washed Ken is forced to fight his childhood friend and training partner Ryu, while Honda faces Bison and Guile is left with Vega.

After expecting the worst (especially after the disappointing *Fatal Fury* anime) we were surprisingly impressed with the *Street Fighter Movie*. The character designs by Shuko Murase (Gundam F-91 for anime buffs) are not only superbly detailed but exactly how you want the World Warriors to look. Combined with the wonderfully rendered background paintings and the top-notch animation, the whole film reeks of a quality production. Although the story focuses on Ken and Ryu for the most part, all the characters get a set piece and a chance to perform. The fight detail even goes as far as special moves!

It would be a absolute crime if a British video company didn't pick this up for release in the UK. Not only does have the *Street Fighter II* name to back it up (almost a licence to print money) but it's top-quality anime as well. Forget Claude Van-Damme and Kylie Minogue's effort, this is the real *Street Fighter II* film.

Highly recommended.

Wil Overton

Thanks to Project K (tel: 0181 508 1328) for our preview of the *Street Fighter II Movie*.

5 out of 5

Chun-Li gets ready to meet Guile at the airfield.

Right: Vega and his brainwashed henchmen watch on as the professor demonstrates the android.

Above: Guile confronts Dee Jay after a brawl outside a nightclub, not realising they're being spied on by one of Vega's androids.

Left: Ken concentrates on healing himself after clashing with Vega.

Above: Ryu discovers Fei Long in a travelling circus and soon finds himself in a gambling fight.

Below: Another of Vega's androids reports back, after Chun-Li destroys one of its comrades.

Right: Both Dalhism and Honda are analysed by Vega's hench-droid during a street brawl.

Left: At the beginning of the film as Ryu faces Sagat, Vega's analysis shows his huge fighting potential which Sagat is soon on the receiving end of.

WIN! WIN! WIN!

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Yes! Our chums at Pioneer LDCE have done it again. They've provided us with some exclusive anime kit which you won't be able to get in any shop. If you are one of the five lucky winners you'll receive all the following;

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Here are the questions.

1. Green is often used as the colour of environmental awareness. But what else does it sometimes represent?

a. Crass stupidity at a governmental level.
b. Inexperience.
c. Searing rage so strong that you'd like to rip the heads off he people standing in front of you in the post offices with their insurance documents, correct payment and MOT certificates, waiting to get a new tax disc for their Volvos.

2. Legend is the name of a film. And it's a game as well. But which sports person was known as 'Legend' and, occasionally, 'Beefy'?

a. Zola Budd, the tiny barefoot nationality-changing long-distance runner.
b. Johnny Herbert, the hapless Lotus driver with the attractive girlfriend (or wife, possibly).
c. Ian Botham, the legendary Somerset and England cricketer with the Billy the Fish hair and the habits.

3. Ran is what people who know Sir Ranulph Fiennes, the explorer, call him. But which space centre was Explorer 1, the first US satellite, launched in 1958, launched from?

a. Barry and Alan's Garden Centre, incorporating 'Snoggers' Fun Pub and Interstellar Satellite Launch Site.
b. Cape Canaveral.
c. The top secret space defence research centre at 32 Massive Retaliation Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona, USA PH1 3JJ.

4. Pioneer is a name for people with wagons, families and silly hats. But who pioneered the invention of the wireless?

a. Gulielmo Marconi
b. Billy Transistor, with his mates Dave Volume and Anthea Tuner.
c. Lord Byron, author of the poorly-received collection of poems, Hours of Idleness and faintly foppish freedom fighter.

5. Video is the name given to a tape with two episodes of *Bottom* and half an *Equinox* on it. It's also the name of a video cassette recorder, which sits on a special shelf under your telly. But where in the world is Montevideo?

a. It's a shop in Uxbridge, near that weird building designed to look like an ocean liner.
b. It doesn't exist. We made it up to provide ourselves with a laugh when we receive cards saying that it's a shop in Uxbridge.
c. It does exist and interestingly, it's the capital of Uruguay, in fact..

There. Just write down the numbers and the letters of the correct answers and send them to us at this address; New Pioneer Competition, *Super Play*, 29 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2DL. Only one try per person, please. It's amazing that when people send in multiple applications, they always arrive together, and the post office usually put an elastic band round them to make delivery easier. So don't do it.

The closing date is Friday, 31 March, so all you overseas readers, that should give you enough time. Good luck!

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IN SUPER PLAY

SUPER PLAY ISSUE 30 ON SALE THURSDAY, 2 MARCH 1995

MEGA MAN X 2

The long-awaited sequel to Capcom's biggie will be here! We check it out in depth and find out *exactly* what that mysterious DSP chip in it actually does. Is *Mega Man X 2* really the future of gaming?

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THE SUPER QUIZ ANSWERS

Easy, weren't they, this month? That's because the questions were set by a panel of Radio One FM DJs. See if you can guess who wrote which question! We'll start you off – the medium question number two is from Mark Goodier.

EASY
1. *King Arthur's World.*
2. Bear Hugger.
3. 440lbs.

MEDIUM
1. Jennifer.
2. Seika.
3. *Samurai Spirits.*

HARD
1. A penguin-thing from *Ultimate Parodius.*
2. Super Deformed.
3. Yuzo Takada (of *3x3 Eyes* fame).

That's the end of that. This little bit is always the last thing in the mag, coming, as it does, at the end. Normally we have a joke at Danny Whelan's expense, but since he didn't send us a Super Quiz this month, we can't, really. Never mind.

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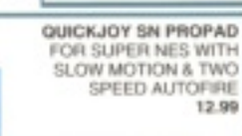

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